
A

Christian Library:

sc. sc.

A

CHRISTIAN LIBRARY:

CONSISTING OF

EXTRACTS FROM AND ABRIDGMENTS OF

THE

CHOICEST PIECES

OF

Practical Divinity

WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE ENGLISH TONGUE.

IN THIRTY VOLUMES.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1750, IN FIFTY VOLUMES, 12MO.

BY JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOL. VIII.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. CORDEUX, FOR T. BLANSHARD, 14, CITY-ROAD, AND
66, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1820.

THE
CONTENTS.

EXTRACTS FROM THE WORKS OF MR. ISAAC AMBROSE.

THE PRACTICE OF SANCTIFICATION: EXEMPLIFIED IN THE
BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES.

	Page
CHAP. I.— <i>The Entrance</i>	3—7

OF DUTIES IN GENERAL.

SECT. I.— <i>Of the Equity of Duties</i>	8
SECT. II.— <i>Of the Insufficiency of Duties</i>	9
SECT. III.— <i>Of the Healing of Duties</i>	9—11
SECT. IV.— <i>No Resting in Duties</i>	11—13
SECT. V.— <i>Of the Use and Ends of Duties</i>	13—17
SECT. VI.— <i>Of the essential Requisites in Duties</i>	17—19

OF SELF-DENIAL.

SECT. I.— <i>Of the Nature of Self-Denial</i>	20
SECT. II.— <i>Of the Denial of sinful Self</i>	21—23
SECT. III.— <i>Of the Denial of our external Relations</i>	23—28
VOL. VIII.	a

	Page
SECT. IV.— <i>Of the Denial of our special Gifts</i>	28—30
SECT. V.— <i>Of the Denial of our worldly Profits</i>	30—34
SECT. VI.— <i>Of the Denial of our worldly Pleasures</i>	34—36
SECT. VII.— <i>Of the Denial of our Honour, Praise, and good Name among Men</i>	36—40
SECT. VIII.— <i>Of the Denial of our Life for Jesus Christ</i>	40—43
SECT. IX.— <i>Of Self-denial, even with Regard to the Graces of God</i>	43—47

OF THE LIFE OF FAITH.

SECT. I.— <i>Of the Nature of the Life of Faith</i>	48—51
SECT. II.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in particular, as in temporal Evils</i>	51—54
SECT. III.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith, in temporal Blessings</i>	54—57
SECT. IV.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Evils</i>	57—59
SECT. V.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Blessings, as derived to us from God and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ</i>	59—62
SECT. VI.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Graces</i>	62—65
SECT. VII.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in Spiritual Duties</i>	65—67
SECT. VIII.— <i>Of the Manner of the Life of Faith in Things eternal</i>	67—68
SECT. IX.— <i>Of the Manner of this Life of Faith, in Regard of others</i>	68—71

OF FAMILY DUTIES.

SECT. I.— <i>Of the Nature of Family Duties</i> .	72
SECT. II.— <i>Of the Preparatives to Family Duties</i>	72, 73

	Page
SECT. III.—On the Duties of Governors in general	73—75
SECT. IV.—Of the Duties of Parents to their Children	75—78
SECT. V.—Of the Duties of Masters to Servants	78, 79
SECT. VI.—Of the Duties of the Husband and Wife	79—84
SECT. VII.—Of Duties of Children to Parents	84, 85
SECT. VIII.—Of the Duties of Servants to their Masters	85—87

**LOOKING UNTO JESUS: OR, THE SOUL'S EYING OF JESUS,
AS CARRYING ON THE GREAT WORK OF MAN'S SALVATION.**

To the Reader	91—95
--------------------------------	--------------

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.—The Division and Opening of the Words	97—99
CHAP. II.—The Duty of looking off all other Things confirmed and cleared	99—101
CHAP. III.—SECT. I.—An Explanation of the Act and Object of looking	102—104
SECT. II.—The main Doctrine, and Confirmation of it	104, 105
SECT. III.—Use of Reproof	105—109
SECT. IV.—Use of Exhortation	109, 110
SECT. V.—Motives from our Wants in case of Neglect	110—112
SECT. VI.—Motives from our Riches, in case we are lively in this Duty	113—115

	Page
LOOKING UNTO SESUS, FROM THE CREATION UNTIL HIS FIRST COMING.	
THE SECOND BOOK.	
CHAP. I.—SECT. I.—<i>Of Christ promised by Degrees</i>	116—118
SECT. II.—<i>Of the Covenant of Promise as intimated to Adam</i>	118—124
SECT. III.—<i>Of the Covenant of Promise as manifested to Abraham</i>	124—130
SECT. IV.—<i>Of the Covenant of Promise as manifested to Moses</i>	130—141
SECT. V.—<i>Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to David</i>	142—146
SECT. VI.—<i>Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to Israel about the Time of the Captivity</i>	147—152
CHAP. II.—SECT. I.—<i>Of knowing Jesus, as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation, from the Creation until his first coming</i>	152, 153
SECT. II.—<i>Of considering Jesus in that Respect</i>	153—165
SECT. III.—<i>Of desiring Jesus in that Respect</i>	165—171
SECT. IV.—<i>Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect</i>	171—173
SECT. V.—<i>Of believing in Jesus in that Respect</i>	173—177
SECT. VI.—<i>Of loving Jesus in that Respect</i>	178—180
SECT. VII.—<i>Of joying in Jesus in that Respect</i>	180—182
SECT. VIII.—<i>Of calling on Jesus in that Respect</i>	182—184
SECT. IX.—<i>Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect</i>	184—187

LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS BIRTH.

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.—SECT. I.— <i>Of the Tidings of Christ</i>	188—191
SECT. II.— <i>Of the Conception of Christ</i> . . .	191—193
SECT. III.— <i>The Duplicity of Natures in Christ</i>	194—197
SECT. IV.— <i>Of the Union of the two Natures of Christ, in one and the same Person</i> . . .	197—204
SECT. V.— <i>Of the Birth of Christ</i>	204—207
SECT. VI.— <i>Of some Consequents of Christ's Birth</i>	207—211
CHAP. II.—SECT. I.— <i>Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Birth</i>	211, 212
SECT. II.— <i>Considering Jesus in that Respect</i>	213—220
SECT. III.— <i>Of desiring Jesus in that Respect</i>	220—223
SECT. IV.— <i>Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect</i>	223—226
SECT. V.— <i>Of believing in Jesus in that Respect</i>	226—234
SECT. VI.— <i>Of loving Jesus in that Respect</i>	234—238
SECT. VII.— <i>Of joying in Jesus in that Respect</i>	239—242
SECT. VIII.— <i>Of calling on Jesus in that Respect</i>	243—244
SECT. IX.— <i>Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect</i>	244—249

LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS LIFE.

THE FOURTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.—SECT. I.— <i>Of the Beginning of the Gospel</i>	250, 251
SECT. II.— <i>Of the preaching of John the Baptist</i>	251—253

	Page
SECT. III.— <i>Of the Baptism of Jesus</i>	253—255
SECT. IV.— <i>Of the Fasting and Temptation of Christ</i>	255—262
SECT. V.— <i>Of the first Manifestation of Christ</i>	263—265
SECT. VI.— <i>Of Christ's whipping the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple</i>	265, 266
CHAP. II.—SECT. I.— <i>Of the second Year of Christ's Ministry</i>	266, 267
SECT. II.— <i>Of Christ's Sermons this Year</i> . .	267—269
SECT. III.— <i>Of Christ's prophetical Office</i> . . .	269—271
SECT. IV.— <i>Of Christ's Miracles</i>	272—277
CHAP. III.—SECT. I.— <i>Of the third Year of Christ's Ministry</i>	277
SECT. II.— <i>Of Christ's Ordination of his Apostles</i>	277—279
SECT. III.— <i>Of Christ's Reception of Sinners</i>	279—284
SECT. IV.— <i>Of Christ's easy Yoke, and light Burden</i>	284—287
CHAP. V.—SECT. I.— <i>Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Life</i> :	287, 288
SECT. II.— <i>Of considering Jesus in that Respect</i>	288—295
SECT. III.— <i>Of desiring Jesus in that Respect</i>	295—298
SECT. IV.— <i>Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect</i>	299, 300
SECT. V.— <i>Of believing in Jesus in that Respect</i>	301—304
SECT. VI.— <i>Of loving Jesus in that Respect</i>	304—307
SECT. VII.— <i>Of joying in Jesus in that Respect</i>	307—310
SECT. IX.— <i>Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect</i>	310—318

LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS DEATH.

THE FIFTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.—SECT. I.— <i>Of the Day of Christ's Sufferings, divided into Parts and Hours</i>	319—321
---	---------

	Page
SECT. II.—<i>Of the Brook over which Christ passed</i>	321—323
SECT. III.—<i>Of the Garden into which Christ entered</i>	323, 324
SECT. IV.—<i>Of the Prayer that Christ there made</i>	324—329
SECT. V.—<i>Of the Agonies that Christ suffered</i>	329, 330
SECT. VI.—<i>Of Judas's Treason, Christ's Apprehension, binding, and leading unto Annas</i>	331—333
SECT. VII.—<i>Of Christ's Examination and Condemnation</i>	333—338
CHAP. II.—SECT. I.—<i>Of Christ's Indictment, and Judas's fearful End</i>	338—340
SECT. II.—<i>Of Christ's Mission to Herod</i>	340—342
SECT. III.—<i>Of Christ and Barabbas compared; and of the Question debated betwixt Pilate and the Jews</i>	342—344
SECT. IV.—<i>Christ scourged, clothed in purple, and crowned with thorns</i>	345, 346
SECT. V.—<i>Of Christ brought forth, and sentenced</i>	346—349
SECT. VI.—<i>Of Christ's Crucifixion</i>	349—353
SECT. VII.—<i>Of the Consequents of Christ's Crucifixion</i>	354, 355
CHAP. III.—SECT. I.—<i>Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Death</i>	355, 356
SECT. II.—<i>Of considering Jesus in that Respect</i>	356—363
SECT. III.—<i>Of desiring Jesus in that Respect</i>	363—367
SECT. IV.—<i>Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect</i>	368—371
SECT. V.—<i>Of believing in Jesus in that Respect</i>	371—373
SECT. VI.—<i>Of loving Jesus in that Respect</i>	374—376
SECT. VII.—<i>Of joying in Jesus in that Respect</i>	376—380

	Page
SECT. VIII.— <i>Of calling on Jesus in that Respect</i>	380, 381
SECT. IX.— <i>Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect</i>	381—387

LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS RESURRECTION.

THE SIXTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.—SECT. I.— <i>Of the Time and Reasons of Christ's Resurrection</i>	388—390
SECT. II.— <i>Of the Manner of Christ's Resurrection</i>	390—394
SECT. III.— <i>Of the Arguments of Christ's Resurrection</i>	394—398
SECT. IV.— <i>Of Christ's appearing to Mary Magdalen</i>	398—401
SECT. VI.— <i>Of Christ's Appearance to his ten Disciples</i>	402—405
CHAP. II.—SECT. I.— <i>Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Resurrection</i>	406
SECT. II.— <i>Of considering Jesus in that Respect</i>	407—410
SECT. III.— <i>Of desiring Jesus in that Respect</i>	410—413
SECT. IV.— <i>Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect</i>	413—420
SECT. V.— <i>Of believing in Jesus in that Respect</i>	420—424
SECT. VI.— <i>Of loving Jesus in that Respect</i>	425, 426
SECT. VII.— <i>Of joying in Jesus in that Respect</i>	426—428
SECT. VIII.— <i>Of calling on Jesus in that Respect</i>	429
SECT. IX.— <i>Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect</i>	430—432

EXTRACTS

FROM

T H E W O R K S

ISAAC AMBROSE,

Some time Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire.

CONTINUED,

THE
PRACTICE
OF
SANCTIFICATION:
EXEMPLIFIED IN
THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES.

THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES.

CHAP. I.

THE ENTRANCE.

YOU have heard the doctrine, precepts, and pattern of a man in his *second, or new birth*: now remains what follows all his life; and therein, 1. His privileges. 2. His duties.

1. His privileges, as he is now a believer in Christ, are, *justification, sanctification, glorification*.

The first privilege which immediately follows our union with Christ, is *justification*.

A man may be said to be justified either *virtually*, or *actually*; either in Christ, or in himself. 1. Virtually in Christ: And this is from the day of Christ's passion, and in the virtue of his satisfaction; yet this intendeth no more but that satisfaction is made, and remission purchased by the blood of Christ. 2. Actually, in himself: When a man hath the possession of *justification*, immediately after his union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this *justification*, considered as it is a *state of favour* with God, which a man at his first believing is put into, is not

reiterated ; yet the particular acts of pardon and imputations of Christ's righteousness are continually by God communicated unto the believer. In this respect this *actual* justification (or particular acts of pardon,) hath its degrees of progression. The beginning thereof is laid in our first union with Christ ; the consummation of it is not till the Judge at the latter day hath solemnly pronounced the sentence of final absolution. Between these there is a progressive work of justification, by the constant actings of the Spirit applying the blood of Christ by faith, to the quiet and comfort of the soul. The first we may term initial justification, the second progressive, the last perfective.

It hath been commonly said by some of our best divines, that justification is transacted in our first incorporation into Christ ; at which time it is conceived, that the pardon of *all sin* is sealed to the believer *at once*. But I fear the misunderstanding of this point hath laid the ground upon which some build that unhappy structure which "turns the grace of God into wantonness." Who knoweth not that justification, according to the Scripture, is, *The act of a judge pronouncing a judicial sentence, wherein he absolveth the person of the sinner from all sin and punishment due to him for sin, and that for the alone righteousness * of the Surety, Christ, freely imputed, and by faith received of him?* And according to this, I suppose we shall not err, if we say, 1. That a work of justification is even as yet to us future, viz. at the last day, when we shall receive a final discharge, and when God shall wipe away all tears from our eys. And yet, 2. That in our first union with Christ there is a work of justification, viz. actual imputation of Christ's righteousness, and actual remission of all sin, or of what sin for the present the soul stands guilty of, at once, or at that

* The righteousness of Christ here spoken of includes his whole active and passive obedience, the sole meritorious cause of our justification, and of all our blessings.

time when it is first united to Christ. I dare not say, that justification is one individual act ; or that all sins, past, present, and to come, are remitted to the believer at once ; but this I say, that in our first union, all our sins, past and present, are actually pardoned ; and this favour received is a pledge of assurance, that in future also, by applying ourselves to Christ, we may receive the forgiveness of our daily sins, and that at the last day we shall at once be absolved from all accusations laid in against us, and that justification (besides those particular acts of pardon, and imputation of Christ's righteousness) doth note, "A state of grace, and reconciliation with God, for the imputed righteousness of Christ.*

" And being justified by faith, we have peace with God ;" (that is) Christ's righteousness being imputed, and sins pardoned, we have peace with God ; not only peace from God in our consciences, but peace with God in our reconcilement to him, and his favour towards us. This reconciliation consists in two things : 1. In our peace with God, whereby the Lord lays by all acts of hostility against us : 2. In the love and favour of God. He now loves us not only with a love of good-will, but with a love of complacency and delight. Oh ! consider what a blessed state this is !

Adoption follows reconciliation, whereby the Lord accounts us sons : " Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The Lord accounts us just in our justification, friends in our reconciliation, sons in our adoption. Now this adoption is either begun in this life, or perfected in the world to come, when we shall receive all the privileges of sons.

Sanctification follows adoption : no sooner are we sons, but we receive the image of our heavenly Father in sanctification ; the manner of it is thus : 1. The Spirit works

* That is, for the merit of his obedience unto death.

in us a principle of spiritual life. The Scripture sometimes calls it a seed, sometimes a spring or fountain, sometimes the life of Christ, because it is conveyed unto us by the Spirit of Christ, by means of our union with Christ. What name soever we give it, we may not conceive it to be a new faculty added unto those which are in men by nature, but an improvement of those abilities to work spiritually as they did naturally before regeneration. Hence it is that a regenerate man in Scripture is said “to walk after the Spirit,—to be led by the Spirit,—to walk in the Spirit.” 2. From this fountain spring all those habits of spiritual grace, which are severally distinguished by the names of *faith, hope, love*. Although, to speak properly, they are but the diversifications of that spiritual principle within us, distinguished by these names. 3. From these habits of grace abiding in us, proceed spiritual motions and operations. And as it is with natural habits, so it is with spiritual, they are much increased and strengthened by the use and exercise of them, and are as much weakened by disuse, and neglect of such an exercise. •

The excellency of this privilege appears in these particulars : 1. This is our glory and beauty, even glorification begun : what greater glory than to be like unto God ? “ We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory ; every degree of grace is glory ; and the perfection of glory in heaven consists chiefly in the perfection of grace. 2. This gives us abundance of sweet peace. From whence come troubles, and doubts of God’s favour and love ? Is it not some guilt or decay here ? Is it not our secret dalliance with some known sin ? On the other side, what was Paul’s rejoicing ? Hezekiah’s peace ? The one cried, that “ in all sincerity and simplicity he had his conversation among men ;” the other, “ Lord, remember I have walked before thee uprightly :” not that this was the ground of their peace, for that only is free grace in Christ, but the means of their peace. That is a cursed peace which is kept by looking to Christ, and yet

loving our lusts! 3. By this we have comfortable evidence of our justification. Nor is this a running upon the covenant of works. Is not sanctification (the writing of the law in our hearts) a privilege of the covenant of grace, as well as justification. And can the evidencing of one privilege by another, be a running upon the covenant of works? Oh! consider, how many evangelical promises are made to persons invested with such and such graces! As of *poverty, mourning, meekness*. And to what end, but that every one may take and be assured of his portion manifested particularly therein? Surely none are justified, but they are sanctified; or if not sanctified, they are not justified.

Glorification is the last in execution of God's eternal purpose: and herein we are made partakers of those endless and unutterable joys, which "neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor the heart of any man conceived."

OF

DUTIES IN GENERAL.



SECT. I.

Of the Equity of Duties.

NO sooner is the soul translated into the state of grace, and crowned with those glorious privileges, but immediately it cries out, “ O Lord, what shall I do for thee? How shall I live to thee ? ” Good reason the soul should now give up herself to Christ, for she knows she is not her own, but Christ’s. Can there be such a heart in any Christian, as to continue in sin, because so much grace hath abounded ? Oh no ! “ The love of Christ constrains us,” (saith the apostle) “ because we thus judge, —that he died for all, that they who live, should not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.” There is a principle of love in the hearts of believers, and this love of Christ constrains them to live to Christ : “ Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of Christ, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

SECT. II.

Of the Insufficiency of Duties.

BUT, alas ! what are these duties to my Lord ? Or what are these duties in themselves ?

1. All the duties of man are nothing at all unto God : “ Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise can be profitable unto himself ? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous ? Or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect ? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him ? Or what receiveth he from thine hand ? ” All the service of men and angels, though they run parallel with the longest lines of eternity, are no sufficient recompence for the soul’s deliverance ; “ When we have done all, still we must say, we are unprofitable servants.”

2. All the duties of man are in some respect sinful : “ Christians may distinguish between that which is of the Spirit, in works after renovation, and the whole work after they have done it. Now although the motions and assistance of the Spirit be pure, holy, and without scum in the spring, to wit, in itself, yet by that time these motions and assistance have passed through the channels of their hearts, and have been mixed with their manifold corruptions in doing, even the whole work thereby becomes polluted.” If this be so, that our best recompence to Christ for his love be unprofitable to him, and sinful as done by man ; what shall I say ? How must I carry myself to my Redeemer ?

SECT. III.

Of the Healing of Duties.

I DARE not but obey ; though all the duties in the world are insufficient to recompense those bowels of God’s

mercies in Christ, I must not therefore cast away duties. It is true, I cannot but sin in all I do ; my best duties are tainted and mingled with sin ; but will it follow, that because I cannot be more clean, therefore I must be more filthy than needs be ? Nay, O my soul, if thou art married to that bridegroom Christ, duties and all things else are clean to thee. There is an healing of duties, if we be in Christ. Certainly that fruit which cometh from a root of faith, must needs be good fruit. "I believe, therefore I speak," saith the Psalmist. O my soul, canst thou say, "I believe, therefore I pray ; I believe, therefore I sanctify the Lord's day ; I believe, therefore I do all duties of obedience ?" Thy obedience then is the fruit of paradise, for it grows on the very tree of life ; Christ is "the Sun of Righteousness, that ariseth with healing in his wings." Christ is that Sun, that by his heat of love extracts all the sin out of thy duties, and so thy duties are healed ; the spiritual part of them being presented by the intercession of Christ, and the defects covered by the righteousness of Christ.

2. But how shall I know that Christ thus takes my duties and heals them, and minglest them with his own incense, and carries them in unto God the Father ? Didst thou never find a spiritual fire come down, as it were, upon thy heart in duty, or after duty ? In the times of the Old Testament, if they offered up a sacrifice, and a material fire came down from heaven, and burnt up the sacrifice, it was a certain testimony that the sacrifice was accepted. Now in the times of the gospel, we must not expect material fire to come down upon our duties ; but hath the Lord at any time caused an inward and spiritual fire to fall down upon thy heart, warming thy spirit in duty ? There the Lord speaks thus much to thee, that thy sacrifice is turned into ashes, and it is accepted by Jesus Christ. This fire issues from the death and intercessions of Christ, our great High-priest ; it is the efficacy of his blood, and power of his glorious intercession, which, when thou feelest any good in duties, doth at that very instant prevail with God the Father for what thou

feelest : say then, “ Do I now in this ordinance, or in this duty, feel my heart warmed, or savingly affected ? Oh ! I see the Lord Jesus, who sits in glory at the right hand of God, now remembers me a poor worm on earth, now I feel the fruit of his Spirit, power, grace, comfort, presence, sweetness ; now I taste, I drink, I enjoy, and am abundantly satisfied with his rivers of pleasures ; and if this presence of Christ be so sweet, what is himself then ? ” O my soul, if ever thou dost thus feel the influence of the blood and Spirit of Christ upon thy spirit in duties, go thy way, and give glory to God.

SECT. IV.

No Resting in Duties.

AND yet be wary, O my soul ! It was Luther’s saying, “ Take heed not only of thy sins, but also of thy duties : ” Couldst thou desire and pray till heaven and earth shook, till thou hadst worn thy tongue to the stumps ; couldst thou fast till thy skin and bone cleaved together ; couldst thou purpose with resolution to be better ; couldst thou reform thy heart, head, life, tongue, some, nay, all sins ; couldst thou live like an angel, shine like a sun, walk up and down the world like a distressed pilgrim ; couldst thou die ten thousand deaths, lie in hell so many millions of years as there are piles of grass on the earth, or sands on the sea-shore, or stars in heaven ; I tell thee, not one spark of God’s wrath against thy sins can be quenched by all these duties, nor by any of these sorrows or tears. It was Austin’s saying, though it sounds harsh, that “ Repentance damns more than sin ; ” meaning, that thousands perished by resting therein.

But how shall any man know that he rests in his duties ? By these signs following :

1. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he never found it a hard matter to come out of his duties. If thou canst not tell the time when thou didst rest in duties,

and didst groan to be delivered from these entanglements, thou hast just cause to fear.

2. It is a sign that a man rests in duties, if he exceedingly prize the bare performance of duties ; those duties that carry thee out of thyself unto Christ, make thee to prize Christ. Now tell me, dost thou glory in thyself ? Dost thou say, " I was before ignorant, hard-hearted, but now I understand better, now I can sorrow for my sins, I can pray with some life ? " Alas, poor soul ! these things do argue only the Spirit of God breathing on thee, not dwelling in thee. If thou restest here, if thou thus enhancest the price of duties, then do I pronounce from God, that thou dost rest in duties : " What things (saith Paul,) were gain to me," i. e. before his conversion, " those I account loss for Christ." This is the reason why a child of God, commonly after his prayers, doubts much of God's love towards him. Whereas another man, that falls short of him, never so much as questions his estate. The first seeth much vileness in his best duties, and so judgeth meanly of himself ; but the other is ignorant of any such vileness, and therefore thinks highly of them.

3. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he never came to be sensible of their poverty, and utter emptiness in themselves before God. Didst thou never feel thyself in this manner ? " Oh ! I am ignorant as any beast, as vile as any devil ; what a nest of sin and rebellion works in my heart. I once thought, at least my heart and desires were good, but now I feel no spiritual life. O dead heart ! I am the poorest, basest, and blindest creature that ever lived ! " If thou never feelest thyself thus, thou never camest out of thy duties.

4. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he gain no evangelical righteousness by duties, i. e. if he prize not, desire not, delight not in union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence a child of God asks himself after sermon, after prayer, after the sacrament, What have I gained of Christ ? Have I got more knowledge of Christ ? More

admiring of the Lord Jesus Christ ? Have my affections been raised, my graces acted, my soul refreshed with the delights of Christ ? On the contrary, a carnal heart that rests in his duties, asketh only, " What have I done ? " " I thank God," (saith the Pharisee,) " I am not as other men are,—I fast twice in the week, I give tythes of all I possess." So I pray, and hear, and reform, and sorrow for sin, therefore I shall be saved. No such matter : let a man have a bucket of gold, doth he think to get water because he hath a bucket ? No, no, he must let it down into the well, and draw up water with it. So must thou let down all thy duties into the Lord Jesus Christ, and draw life, and light, and grace from his fulness, otherwise thou shalt perish without Christ. Oh ! that the ministers of Christ would become sons of thunder in this matter ! Many have had experience of Christ's enlarging the common gifts of his Spirit ; but what have they felt of Christ's renewing, sanctifying, and healing their lusts ? Oh ! it is far more comfortable, to find Christ's power melting thy heart for sin, mortifying thy lusts, quickening thee to holiness, than to find ten thousand enlargements in holy performances.

SECT V

Of the Use and Ends of Duties.

AND canst thou not, O my soul, be saved by thy duties ? To what end then shouldst thou pray ; or hear, or sorrow, or repent, or meditate, or examine ? I answer,

1. That hereby thou mayst express obedience to God's will ; " Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Jesus Christ concerning you."

2. That God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may be honoured by the performance of these duties : " Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much

fruit." Abraham believed, and gave God glory. So we should pray, and meditate, and hear, and all should tend to the glory of God.

3. That duties may be as evidences of God's love to them who are in Christ Jesus. They cannot save, but they let the soul into Christ, and follow and accompany such a man as shall be saved. Duties bring you unto Christ, and are evidences when you are in Christ, that the Lord and mercy is yours ; even as at the sacrament, the elements of bread and wine are outward signs to bring Christ and the heart together. Indeed the heart must not rest in these signs ; but when the soul is let into Christ, then Faith must let go the outward elements, and treat immediately with the Lord Jesus. So grace and duties are inward signs ; and while men make use of them only as signs and means to let them come in unto Christ, and their rejoicing is not in them, but in Christ ; their confidence is not pitched upon them, but upon Christ ; there will be no danger at all in making such use of signs ; neither is it more derogatory to free grace, or to Christ's honour, for God to make such effects signs of our union with him, than it was to make outward signs of his presence. It is true, these are not full testimonies without the Spirit of Christ.

4. That they who exercise duties may obtain the promises. "Godliness is profitable unto all things," (saith the apostle,) "having the promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." There are many promises scattered up and down in the Word, and hereby if God be not a debtor unto thee, yet he is to himself, and to his own faithfulness.—"Thou, Lord, payest debts, and owest none ; it was free for thee before thou hadst promised, whether to give me heaven or not ; but now the Word is out of thy mouth, I use duties as means, though I adhere only to thee, and to thy faithfulness, who hast promised." Duties are considered, first, as services, in respect of the command ; and secondly, as means to obtain blessings at God's hands, in relation to his promise. Now most in

the world perform duties as acts of obedience only, and so rest in the present performance ; but if we do them in faith, we should have an eye to the promise, and look on duties as means to obtain some mercy ; yea, salvation itself at God's hands, Phil. ii. 12, Rom. x. 10, 2 Cor. vii. 10, 1 Pet. i. 9. But is not this to be saved by duties ? No : for herein we speak of duties only instrumentally, and with relation to the Lord Jesus Christ ; not as meritorious causes, but as subordinate means of our salvation in the name of Christ. The best of duties, in their own natures, are but mere empty pits, and dry channels, though never so curiously cut out, but Christ fills them.

5. That these duties may turn to our comfort. Not so as for us to put confidence in them, or to take comfort from them as causes ; that cannot be, for who can look upon any thing he doth with that boldness ? but as the testimony of God's love to us ; and as the means of consolation ? Thus Hezekiah, not as a proud pharisee, but as a thankful acknowledger of what was in him, prayed, “ I beseech thee, O Lord, remember me, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.” We may therefore take comfort from duties, not so as to rest in them, but as a means of grace, and so as to praise God thereby.

6. That others may receive good and glorify God. “ These things are good, and profitable unto men,” (saith the apostle) ; and “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Christ doth not here encourage vain-glory, but he propounds the true ends of our visible holiness. Hierom said of Augustine, that he loved Christ dwelling in Augustine : so ought we to walk, that others may love Christ dwelling in us. There is an exhortation to wives so to walk that their husbands may be won to the Lord. Sweet soul, it may be, thou prayest for thy husband, in a carnal condition ; thou desirest him to go to hear such a minister, such a sermon ; go on in

these duties, adding this to the rest,—see that thy life also may co-operate to convert him.

7. That duties may carry us to the Lord Jesus Christ: he alone “ is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,” i. e. in the use of the means. Hear a sermon to carry thee to the Lord Jesus: fast, and pray, and get a full tide of affections in them to carry thee to Jesus Christ, i. e. to get more love of him, more acquaintance with him, more union in him, and communion with him; use thy duties as Noah’s dove did her wings, to carry thee to the ark of the Lord Jesus Christ, where only there is rest. If she had never used her wings, she had fallen into the waters; and if she had not returned to the ark, she had found no rest. So, if thou shalt use no duties, but cast them all off, thou art sure to perish; and if they convey thee not to Christ, thou mayest lie down in sorrow.

8. That the Lord Christ may be exalted, and advanced by duties. The main end of duties is the glory of him who hath redeemed us with the price of his blood, and the power of his Spirit; this sets the crown on his head. How many perform duties, not to set the crown on Christ’s head! But this is the main end of right obedience, that the crown may be set on Christ’s head, that he who is King of Saints may have the honour given him due to his kingly office. O my soul, in respect of all those ends, use and exercise duties, but be sure of Christ in all, above all, more than all. Oh! let Christ have the crown set on his head, give him all the glory. Cast not away duties, but cast them down at the feet of Jesus Christ, as the twenty-four elders cast their crowns, saying, “ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, (and among them all duties,) for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

And yet let me warn you of one dangerous snare. Some think if they fetch in their comfort by duties, as by prayer, meditation, &c. that then it would be a comfort only of

their own hammering out, and not the genuine joy of the Holy Ghost. A desperate mistake ; they set the workings of God's Spirit and their own spirit in opposition, when their spirits must stand in subordination to God's. God's Spirit usually works our comforts, by setting our own spirits at work upon the promises, and by raising our thoughts to the objects of our comforts. And yet I deny not, that if any should so think to work out his comforts by meditation, prayer, reading the Word, as to attempt the work in his own strength, and not do all in subordination to God, and the Spirit's assistance, the comfort would be nothing but vanity, a comfort indeed of their own hammering out.

SECT. VI.

Of the essential Requisites in Duties.

BUT what are they we call duties ? Or what are those essential requisites in duties ? Many by duties intend nothing but that which is external, as coming to the church and receiving of sacraments. I answer, these are like clothes upon a dead man, that cannot warm him, because there is no life within. The soul of all duties is that which is internal ; in which respect three ingredients are necessary, viz. 1, That they be from God ; 2, through God ; and, 3, to God. 1. From God. It is of the very essence of a duty, that it be commanded by God. Look to this in thy duties, know the commands, and do them, because they are commanded. If thou dost them, and yet knowest not that God commands them, this is no true obedience ; or if thou knowest they are commanded, but yet dost them not because they are commanded, neither is this obedience to God. In all duties rightly performed, there must be a knowledge of, and an eye to the will of God, Rom. xii. 2, Eph. v. 17

2. Through God, i. e. 1. Through the Spirit, who doth spiritualize them. 2. Through Christ, who presents them and makes them acceptable to God. (1.) Through the Spirit of God. Now the Spirit works on our spirits to the performance of our duties. And therefore look how much there is of the Holy Spirit in duty, so far it is sanctified, so far it is accepted, and no further. "God is my witness," (saith Paul,) "whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son." In every service we perform, our spirit stirred up by God's Spirit, must needs have a hand in it, or it is but the carcase of a right service. The soul, will, and affections must go together with our duties, (that I mean by our spirit,) or the vitals are wanting. If a man come to confess his sins, and yet slight them inwardly in his heart; if a man pray for reconciliation with God, and yet have no longing in his heart after it; if he ask grace, or the spirit of mortification, and yet his heart doth not inwardly seek it; he prays not in the Spirit, and therefore God will not accept it. (2.) Through Christ: for Christ perfects, perfumes, and presents our duties to his heavenly Father. As duties come from us, they savour of flesh, but the angel of the covenant mingleth incense with them; Rev. viii. 8, "and so he offers them upon the golden altar, which is before the throne." Here is sweet comfort, O my soul. What though thy duties be weak, and cold, and confused; yet through Christ they are enlivened with his intercessory Spirit. Through Christ they are perfumed with the precious odours of his fresh bleeding merits, and blessed mediation, and so they are made acceptable to God, that he may receive them. Observe here a double intercessor: one is the Spirit, that helps our infirmities; the other is Christ, that makes them acceptable to God.

3. To God; that is, to set forth his glory: for as his name is blasphemed when we walk in wickedness, so it is glorified in our doing our duties. This is the end of all our duties, indeed of all our doings; "Whether ye eat or

drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." One duty sanctifying Christ in the heart, is more than a thousand. Young Christians, it may be, do more works, but not as works of grace; the more evangelical our works are, and the more to God, the better they are: "We are of the circumcision, who rejoice in the Lord Jesus, worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh."

OF

SELF-DENIAL.

SECT. I.

Of the Nature of Self-Denial.

SELF-DENIAL is a total, thorough, utter abnegation of a man's own ends, counsels, affections, and a whole prostration of himself, and of all that is his under Christ Jesus. And thus we have the meaning of Christ, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself;" i. e. let him lay aside his own wisdom as an empty lamp, his own will as an evil commander, his own imaginations as a false rule, his own affections as corrupt counsellors, and his own ends as base and unworthy marks to be aimed at. "Let him deny himself," whatsoever is of himself, within himself, or belonging to himself, as a corrupt and carnal man; let him go out of himself, that he may "come to me;" let him empty himself, that he may be capable of me, and that I may reign and rule within him. As in Joseph's dream, the sun, moon, and the eleven stars did obeisance to him, and all the sheaves in the field to his sheaf; so in the regenerate man, all the supernatural gifts and graces, all the moral endowments and abilities, all the natural powers and faculties of the soul, with all the members of the body, and all the labours of the life, and whatsoever else, must do obeisance, and be made subject unto Jesus Christ. And this is true self-denial.

SECT. II.

Of the Denial of sinful Self.

FIRST, we must deny sinful self, and this we are to deny simply and absolutely, whether it be the whole body of corruption and concupiscence, or those personal corruptions which we in our particular state are more especially carried unto.

1. We are absolutely to deny the whole body of corruption and concupiscence. We are to mortify, crucify, and subdue it, and to revenge the blood of Christ against this sin. This is the meaning of the apostle, “ Mortify your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence.”—Now for the denying or mortifying of this concupiscence, observe these directions,—(1.) Be sensible of it, cry out, “ Oh ! wretched man than I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?” (2.) Endeavour to get a willing heart to have it mortified. (3.) Be peremptory in denying the requests of concupiscence ; bar up the doors, give it no audience. So Christ gave Peter a peremptory denial when he would have persuaded him from his passion, saying, “ Get thee behind me, satan.” (4.) Take pains to mortify this evil principle. “ I run not in vain : I fight not as one that beats the air ;” that is, I take pains, but not in vain ; I take no more pains than I must needs, if I took any less I could not come to that I aim at. The less pains we take in subduing this corruption, the more will it increase ; we must use the means God hath appointed, as the Word, prayer, fasting, watching, weeping, and mourning ; to these I may add covenants and vows : provided that they be of things lawful ; that we esteem them not as duties of absolute necessity ; and that we bind not ourselves perpetually, lest our vows become burthens to us ; if we will vow, let us only vow for a time, that when the time is expired we may either renew our

vows, or let them cease, as necessity requires. (5.) Labour to get the assistance of the Spirit of Christ. “ The wind bloweth where it listeth;” i. e. the Spirit worketh where it listeth; yet this hinders not, but that the Spirit may list to blow in the use of the means. Surely there are means to get the Spirit, and to hinder the Spirit ; the Spirit may be won or lost, in the doing or not doing these things :—

1. If we would have the Spirit, we must know the Spirit ; we must so know him, as to give him the glory of the work of every grace ; the want of the knowledge of Christ’s Spirit is the very reason why men receive not the Spirit. The first means to have the Spirit is to know the Spirit, that we may give him the glory of every grace. 2. If we would have the Spirit, we must take heed that we quench not the Spirit ; I mean not, by quenching the Spirit, a quite putting of it out ; but a growing careless and remiss in the duties of religion, and not cherishing every good motion of the Spirit in our hearts. 3. If we would have the Spirit, we must take heed that we “ grieve not the Spirit.” Let us not drive him by our sins out of the temples of our souls, or disturb him in his gracious and comfortable operations there ; but so demean ourselves that he may stay in our spirits, and manifest, without any eclipses or interruptions, his sweet and powerful presence within us.

We must absolutely deny those personal corruptions which we are more remarkably carried unto. Now for the denying and mortifying of this sin, (whatever it may be,) observe these directions :—1. Labour to see the disease ; no man will seek for a cure, except he see the disease : the sight of the disease is half the cure of it. Endeavour to find out what is your special sin. 2. Abstain from all beginnings and occasions of this sin : quench it at first ; if we cannot put out a spark, how should we put out a flame ? If we get not the mastery over the first motion to sin, how shall we overcome it when it is brought to maturity ? 3. Turn your delights to God, and Christ, and heavenly things. There is no true self-denial that is

only privative ; a man cannot leave his earthly-mindedness, but presently he must be heavenly-minded. As a man cannot empty a vessel of water, but presently air will come in its place ; so a man cannot deny sinful self, but grace will immediately enter, and take possession of his heart. And Oh ! when it is thus, when the intentions of our minds which we spent upon vanities, are now drawn into prayer and meditations, then lusts wither.

4. Labour after further discoveries of Christ. Believe more, and depend more upon Christ ; yea, trade immediately with Christ, for Christ is the only agent in the work of self-denial. Mistake not, I do not say that we are mere passives in self-denial ; in our progress we are workers together with Christ. And therefore it is said, that we purge ourselves, and that we purify ourselves, and that we, by the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the flesh, because Christ still in going on to purge us, and mortify our lusts, doth it by stirring up our graces, and useth therein acts of our faith, and love, and many motives and considerations to do it. Let us therefore use all means required, but above all, let us bring our hearts to be more and more acquainted with Christ.

SECT. III.

Of the Denial of our external Relations.

SECONDLY, we must deny natural self ; and this we must deny only conditionally, and upon supposition of God's call.

1. We are conditionally to deny our external relations ; to this purpose Christ saith, " If any man cometh to me, and hateth not father, and mother, and children, and brethren, and wife, and sisters, he cannot be my disciple." Not that religion teaches or endures a saint to break the ties of religion or nature ; you see it puts in a plea against such unnaturalness ; " Honour thy father and

mother." Relations are blessings of God; they are God's gifts, and bestowed on the saints in a way of promise. They are the loving tokens which Christ sends to our souls, that so he might draw our loves to him again; and hence it is lawful and commendable to rejoice in them, in subordination to God, and especially to lift up our hearts in thanksgiving to God for them; for "every creature of God is good, (much more the children of our loins, and wives of our bosoms,) if received with thanksgiving."

Yet we must deny them for God in these cases :

1. If they retard us in the way to Christ; if they entice us to make haltings in our runnings through fire and through water to the Lord Jesus. If our dearest relations should beckon us out of the way, or retard us in the way to Jesus Christ, "we must not respect father or mother, we must not acknowledge our brethren, nor know our own children." And Christ gives the reason, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." A man should love father and mother, and a man will love son and daughter, for love descends rather than ascends; but if any man love father or mother, or son or daughter, more than Christ, he is not fit to be a disciple of Christ. 2. If they draw contrary ways, Christ drawing one way, and relations drawing another way. In this case, as Christ said, "If a man hate not father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." If any man hate not, i. e. if a man renounce not all carnal affection, if a man be not disposed (where these loves are incompatible,) to hate father and mother, and all for the love of Christ, he cannot belong to Christ. These two cases may be summed up thus; if our relations do either retard our way to Christ or draw us from Christ, in this sense they ought to be forgotten.

The directions of self-denial in respect of our relations are these :

1. Let us have them as if we had them not. This is the expression of the apostle: "The time is short, it remains, that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as if they rejoiced not." The apostle here alludes to sea-faring men that have almost done their voyage, and begin to strike sail, and are even putting into the harbour; so it is with us; our time is short, as soon as we begin our voyage, we are ready to strike sail. "It remains, therefore, that both they that have wives be as though they had none," &c. q. d. You that are ready to cast anchor, trouble not yourselves about these things, but rather, be ye steadfast, gird up the loins of your minds, let your care be the greatest for heaven; and as for these outward relations, be as if you had none, or think as soon as you are ashore you shall have none; do not glut yourselves, but moderate your hearts in all such comforts as these.

2. Let us resign up all to God. This we have done, and this we must do still. (1.) This we have done in that day when we made our bargain for Christ. Every soul that comes to Christ, parts with all to buy that pearl, and in selling all, he sells not only his corruptions and lusts, but his father, mother, wife, children, all relations conditionally. (2.) This we must do still; we must give up all to God; we, and they, and all, must be at the command of Christ, at the pleasure of God and Christ; indeed nothing is properly called our own but God and Christ; all other things are God's gifts, lent of God, and therefore, (as occasion is,) we must give up all to God again.

3. Let us imitate them, (as occasion is,) who, for Christ's sake, have actually parted with their dearest relations. Thus did Galeacius Caracciolus, the noble marquis of Vico. Vico was one of the paradises of Naples, and Naples was the paradise of Italy, and Italy is the paradise of Europe, and Europe the paradise of all the earth. Yet this marquis being brought to hear a

sermon of Peter Martyr's, God pleased so to work upon his spirit, that he began to enter into serious thoughts, whether his way of popery, wherein he was trained, was right or not. At last, having further light let into his soul, his resolutions were strong to leave the court, and his honours, together with his father, wife, and children, and whatsoever was dear to him. Many grievous combats he had betwixt the flesh and the Spirit, when he resolved on his departure, but the greatest troubles were his relations. For, (1.) As often as he looked on his father, which he almost did every hour, so often he was stricken at the heart with unspeakable grief; his thoughts ran thus: "What! and must I needs forsake my dear and loving father? And cannot I else have God for my father? Oh! unhappy father of my body, which may stand in competition with the Father of my soul?"

(2.) No less was he grieved in respect of his wife; for, having no hope that she would renounce popery, and go with him, he resolved also for Christ's sake to leave her, and to follow Christ; whereupon his thoughts ran thus: "And shall I forsake my wife, the only joy of my heart in this world, and that not for a time, but for ever! How many doleful days,—how many waking nights will she pass over!"

(3.) There was yet a third care, and that was for his children; which were six in all. It was the more grief in that they were so young, as that they could not conceive what it was to want a father! The eldest was scarce fifteen, and the youngest scarce four years old. Towards them his thoughts ran thus: "Shall I within these few days utterly forsake these sweet babes, and leave them to the wide and wicked world, as though they had never been my children, nor I their father?—Poor orphans! what will become of you when I am gone? Your hap is hard, even to be fatherless, your father yet living!—Yet thus must I leave you, all weeping and wailing

one with another, and I, in the mean time, weeping and wailing for you."

Thus resolved, he left his family, and went to Geneva; and he was no sooner gone, but his friends and family were so astonished, that nothing was heard or seen amongst them but lamentations. By his father's commands, and his wife's intreaties, he was persuaded to see them once, and take his journey from Geneva to Vico; having stayed awhile, and being now ready to return to Geneva, his father, at his farewell, gave him many an heavy and bitter curse; his wife embraced him, and took him about the neck, beseeching him in a most loving and pitiful manner, that "he would have care of himself, of his dear wife and children, and not so willingly cast them all away." His young children, all upon their knees, with arms stretched out, and hands holden up, and faces swollen with tears, cried out unto him "to have pity on them, his own bowels, and not to make them fatherless before the time." His friends, with heavy countenances and watery eyes, looked on him, and though for grief they could not speak, yet every look, and every countenance, and every gesture was a loud cry, and a strong entreaty that he would stay, and not leave so ancient and noble a house in such a desolate case. But, above all, there was one most lamentable sight:—Among his children he had one daughter of twelve years old, who crying out amain, and wallowing in tears, fell down, and catching fast hold about his knees, held him so hard that he could by no means shake her off, and the affection of a father wrought so with him, as he could not offer with violence to hurt her. He laboured to be loose, but she held faster; he went away, but she trailed after, crying to him, "not to be so cruel to her his own child, who came into the world by him." This so wonderfully wrought with his nature, that he thought (as he often reported,) that all his bowels rolled about within him, and that his heart would have burst presently, and he should instantly have died. But notwithstanding all this, being armed with a

supernatural fortitude, he broke through all those temptations, and for Christ's sake denied all, and so returned to Geneva.—A glorious self-denial, or a glorious denier of his natural self.

SECT. IV

Of the Denial of our special Gifts.

We are conditionally to deny our special gifts and endowments: as learning, wisdom, power, or any other abilities of mind and body. Indeed learning, wisdom, abilities, are in themselves excellent things. Æneas Silvius said, "That if the face even of human learning could but be seen, it would appear more beautiful than the morning-star." How much more may be said in respect of Divine learning, whose subject is God, and Christ, and the things of God? In this respect therefore we must not deny them. Yet we must deny them in these cases, 1. In respect of any high thoughts of our own excellencies; "Be not wise in your own conceit," saith the apostle; to which agrees that of Solomon, "Lean not to thine own understanding." 2. In respect of any use of them according to the world. Of this God speaketh when he saith, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Thus the apostle triumphed, saying, "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" Worldly wisdom usually scorns the great mysteries of godliness, the foolishness of preaching, the simplicity of the saints; but "this wisdom descendeth not from above," saith the apostle, "but is earthly, sensual, devilish." 1. Earthly; it minds only earthly things. 2. Sensual; it prefers the pleasures of sense, and pleasing the appetite, before peace of conscience and a sense of God's favour. 3. Devilish; for it imitates the devil in

contriving mischief and ruin against the glory of God, the plantation of his grace in the hearts of men: or it is devilish, because the devil usually sets those on work that have a little more wit to do him service: he knows they are more able and active to quarrel, rail, slander, disgrace the truth of God, or ministry of Christ. O poor souls! how do you bark and snatch at those hurtless hands, which would heal and bind up your bleeding souls? O poor idiots! what wisdom is it for you to endeavour their extirpation, who are as stars on the right hand of Christ? They that would do Christ's ministers any deadly harm, must pluck them thence.

The directions of self-denial in respect of our special gifts are these. 1. We must "think soberly of ourselves according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." We are not sober in the apostle's phrase, if either we pretend to that which we have not, or boast of that which we have. 2. We must mind the true ends of learning, wisdom, abilities. What are those ends? To do God more excellent and more glorious service, and to furnish the soul for an higher degree, and a greater measure of sanctification. 3. We must endeavour to walk before God in lowliness of mind. What! are thy gifts more eminent than those of others? It is the Lord that makes thee differ; and as God hath been favourable to thee, so should his favours be as obligations to obedience, humility, and nicekness. 4. We must remember it is not the greatness, but the well-using of the gift that is the glory of the receiver. It is not the having any thing, whether much or little, but the having of Christ with it, that makes it full and satisfactory. 5. We should observe and weigh well, that the issue of all depends, not upon the abilities of man, but upon the all-disposing hand of God. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding." All our abilities are under God's providence, who puts an efficacy into man's abilities, even as he pleaseth. 6. We should esteem all abilities,

gifts, knowledge, as dung and dross “in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord.” All knowledge, art, learning, is nothing to Christ ; there is no excellency in that man’s knowledge that knows not Christ. If we know not Christ, it is nothing if we know ever so much. If we know Christ, it is enough, though we know nothing more ; enough indeed, for in knowing him we have all knowledge. “In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Among wise men, he is the choicest that knows most of Christ ; it is Christ that puts a fulness into our knowledge, as the shining of the sun in the air puts a fulness of light into the eyes. Hence Paul made Christ crucified the centre and circumference of his knowledge, “the breadth, and length, and depth, and heighth of his knowledge ;” this was the full latitude of his knowledge, to know Jesus Christ ; and this is excellent knowledge, excellent for the author, matter, subject, fruits, and effects of it ; this is saving knowledge, “This is life eternal to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent.” Oh ! never speak of learning, wisdom, gifts, abilities, in comparison of Christ. Bernard could say, “If thou writest, it doth not relish with me, unless I read Jesus there ; if thou disputest or conferrest, it doth not relish with me, unless Jesus sound there.” All learning is but ignorance in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Come then, and down with all knowledge in this respect ; come, and submit to that true, spiritual, experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ.

SECT. V.

Of the Denial of our worldly Profits.

WE are conditionally to deny our common ends, which naturally men pursue and seek after, as profit, pleasure, and honour. I shall begin with the first. It must be

granted that worldly profits, such as houses, lands, possessions, are blessings of God, because they serve for the refreshing, comforting, supporting of our frail, weak bodies, while we live in this world. Yet we must deny them in these cases. 1. As temptations and snares; when they are either baits unto sin, or when they are the fruits and wages of sin. Thus Zaccheus denies himself in all his unjust gain which he had gotten. Restitution, as it is a most necessary, so it is one of the hardest parts of self-denial. Unjust gain is like a barbed arrow, it kills if it stay within the body, and pulls the flesh away if it be drawn out. 2. As oblations and sacrifices, when Christ calls us to dedicate them unto him, then we must deny them. Thus when Abraham was called from his country into a land which he knew not; and when Daniel was called from a king's court to a den of lions; when Moses was called from the honours of Egypt to the afflictions of God's people; immediately "they consulted not with flesh and blood," but willingly left their own comforts to obey God's commands. All we are, or have, we have to on this condition, to use it, to leave it, to lay it out, to lay it down unto the honour of our Master, from whose bounty we received it.

The directions of self-denial, in respect of our worldly profits, are these. 1. We must look on worldly profits as vanity and nothing. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not," says Solomon, "for riches make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle." Observe, (1.) that riches are not, they are nothing. Those things that make men great in the eyes of the world, are nothing in the eyes of God. (2.) Observe, the Holy Ghost would not have us so much as set our eyes upon riches, they are not objects worth the looking on. (3.) Observe with what indignation he speaks against those that will set their eyes upon them, "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?" As if he had said, what a vain, unreasonable, senseless thing is this? (4.) Observe, that

he says, their parting from us is by way of flight, that is, a sudden, swift, and irrecoverable motion. (5.) Observe, that this flight is by the wings of an eagle, which of all birds hath the most sudden, the most swift, and the most irresistible motion. (6.) Observe, that none needs to put wings upon them to fly away, for "they make themselves wings;" there is matter enough in themselves to put them into a flight. "Oh, that the glory of the world were darkened in our eyes, as one day it shall be, that it might not be so dear unto us as it is!"

2. Consider them as instabilities, uncertainties. All worldly things are like the sea ebbing and flowing; or like the moon, always increasing or decreasing; or like a wheel, always turning up and down. Such a story we have of Sesostris, king of Egypt, who would have his chariot drawn with four kings, and one of them had his eyes continually on the wheel; whereupon Sesostris asked, what he meant by it? He answered, it put him in mind of the mutability of all earthly things, "For I see, (said he,) that part of the wheel, which is now up on high is presently down beneath, and that part which is now below is presently up on high." Whereupon Sesostris being moved, considering what might be his own estate, would never have his chariot drawn after that manner any more.

3. Consider them as snares and thorns. To this purpose cried Solomon, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." Worldlings! do you not feel this true? Mark but how your worldly cares do rush upon you in the morning as soon as you awake; mark but how they accompany you in the day; mark but how they follow you to your beds at night; mark but how they hinder your sleep, and afflict you in your dreams. Oh! what fears? what suspicions? What undermining one another? What disappointments? What vexations? What a clutter of businesses crossing one the other? What snares and

temptations lie in your way at every hand? "You walk all the day long upon snares;" upon dangerous snares, that bring much sin and guilt, and will bring much sorrow and misery.

4. Consider them as fading, in regard of use, which yet prove eternal in regard of punishment. Oh! what a dreadful noise is that in hell! "We have lost eternity, for setting our hearts upon things that were but momentary." What will be thy thoughts at the hour of death? It may be these: "Now are all my hopes at an end, now I must bid farewell to all my comforts, I shall never have mirth any more; the sun is set, the season is at an end for all my comforts; now I see before me a vast ocean of eternity, and of necessity I must launch into it: O Lord, what provision have I made for it?" Oh! this is a thought that will rend the heart in pieces! Oh! what a dreadful shriek will that soul give that sees before it that infinite ocean of eternity, and sees no provision made for it? What will it think, but here is an ocean of hot, scalding lead, and I must launch into it, and I must swim naked in it for ever and ever? I know not how this word may work, but if it be trampled under foot, it may be, within this year or two, it will be said of thee, "Such an one was at such a sermon, or read such a book, and learned that worldly profits were but momentary, but now he is gone." Or it may be thou wilt say on thy death-bed, "Such a book I read, that all worldly profits were but momentary, and that I had not only a little river to swim over, but an infinite ocean to launch into, and yet I would not be warned; and now my season is gone, and I am launching into eternity, the Lord knows what will become of me."

5. Appear for God and his cause, his truth, and people, though the issue may seem dangerous. Thus Esther did with that brave resolution of hers, "If I perish, I perish." Oh! let not a good cause be dashed and blasted, and none have a heart to appear for it, for fear of losing worldly profit.

6. Let all go rather than commit any sin: it is better to want all the profits that earth can afford, than to lose the delights that a good conscience will bring in. Oh! let the bird in the breast be always kept singing, whatsoever we suffer for it; it is better we lose all we have, than to make shipwreck of a good conscience. In this case we must be willing to lose all, or else we are lost in the enjoyment of all.

SECT VI.

Of the Denial of our worldly Pleasures.

THE next common end which men naturally pursue, and which we must deny, is pleasure. It is true some pleasures are lawful; and in a sober, moderate, seasonable use of them, serve for the refreshing, comforting, and supporting of our frail bodies. Yet we must deny them in the following cases. 1. When they are baits to draw us into sin. 2. When they are sinful, or the concomitants of sin, or the fruits and wages of sin.

The directions of self-denial, in respect of worldly pleasures, are these:

1. Look on pleasures, not only as vain, but as vanishing; they are soon gone from us, or we are soon gone from them. (1.) They are soon gone from us, "the fashion of this world passeth away." All pleasures are but like a mountain of snow that melts away presently. (2.) We are soon gone from them, it is but a while, and then we, and all our pleasures, must together vanish; if death draw the curtain, and look in upon us, then we must bid a farewell to them all, never laugh more; never have a merry meeting more; never be in jollity any more. Oh! when we are called to eternity; then all our delights will leave us, and bid us adieu for ever, and how doleful will this be to all the sons and daughters of pleasure! "Your season is done, you have had your time, it is gone, it is past, and cannot be recalled."

2. Consider, this is not the season that should be for pleasure. The apostle James lays it as a great charge upon many in his time, that they lived in pleasure on earth. This is a time to do the great business for which we were born. Oh ! did we think that eternity depended upon this little uncertain time of our lives, we would not say that sensual pleasures were now in season. Surely this time should be spent in seeking to make our peace with God ; this is a time for suing out our pardon, of mourning, and sorrow, and trouble of spirit, and no time for jollity, and fleshly delights. If a condemned man had two or three days granted him that he might sue out his pardon, were that a time for pleasure and sports ? Thus it is with us, the sentence of death is upon us, only a little uncertain time is granted us to seek a pardon ; let us know then what is our work, and let us apply ourselves to it.

3. Ponder the carriage of the saints before us. You know the mean provision that John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, had ; his fare was locusts and wild honey, and yet there was not a greater born of woman before. Timothy, although he was sickly, yet would not take liberty to drink a little wine, but only water, till Paul wrote to him, and in that liberty there was but little granted, and that "for his stomach's sake, and his often infirmities." Basil, in an epistle to Julian, mentions the mean fare he, and others with him, lived on, "They had no need of cooks, all their provision was the leaves of plants, and a little bread." And Hierom reports of Hilarion, that "he never eat any thing before the sun went down, and that which at any time he eat was very mean :" and Hierom himself lived so abstemiously, that he had nothing daily, but a few dried figs with cold water.

4. Do we for Christ, as Christ hath done for us. What ? was he content to part with the pleasures of heaven, the besom of his Father, to redeem poor man ?

And shall not we part with the pleasure of a little meat or drink for him? Is not all his glory, revealed in his word and work, sufficient to shew him worthy of our loves, and to make us willing to part with such empty, poor, slight things, as sensual pleasures? Surely the daughters of pleasure must undress, if ever they will be beautiful in Christ's eyes; "Their ornament must not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel, but the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

5. Meditate on those pleasures above, and say, (you that have the experience of the pleasantness of God's ways,) If the nether springs be so sweet, what will the upper be? If the lower Jerusalem be paved with gold, surely that upper Jerusalem is paved with pearls. It is an excellent speech of Bernard, "Good art thou, O Lord, to the soul that seeks thee; what art thou to the soul that finds thee? If grace be pleasant, how pleasant is glory?" Therefore the saints die so pleasantly, because there is a meeting of grace and glory; grace is delightful, glory more delightful; but when both these meet together, what delight will there then be?

SECT. VII.

Of the Denial of our Honour, Praise, and good Name among Men.

THE next end which naturally men pursue, and which we must deny, is honour, praise, and a good name. We grant these are the gifts and blessings of God. David speaketh expressly, "Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all." Yet we must deny them for God, in the cases following :

1. When they are as snares or baits unto sin. And in

all these things there are dangerous snares ; how prone do they make a man to the sins of vain-glory, self-admiration, self-estimation ? Surely it is a great mercy of God if any man be preserved from these sins that enjoys those blessings ?

2. When we are called by God to dedicate them to God. The Lord never gave us these things upon any other terms, but that we should be willing to part with them for the honour of his name ; God never made us owners, but stewards of them for his service, and if ever we were brought to Christ, into covenant with God in him, we then resigned up all to him, we professed to part with all for him. And good reason, for whatsoever honour or excellency we have, it is he that gives it ; the rainbow is but a common vapour, it is the sun that gilds it, that enamels it with so many colours ; the best of us are but a vapour ; and if any of us be more glorious, more honourable than others, it is the Lord that hath shined upon us, and hath put more beauty, more lustre upon us, than upon other vapours.

The directions of self-denial, in respect of our honour, favour, praise, good name among men, are these :

1. Look on honour, praise, favour, applause, as vanity, nothing. "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher ; vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Observe his expression, vanity, not only vain, but vanity itself. Excessive vanity, for it is vanity of vanities. An heap of vanities, for it is in the plural number, vanity of vanities. All is vanity, not only profit and pleasure, but honour too ; Solomon had experience of them all, and all is vanity. There is no reality in honour, praise, favour, applause of men, which are so much admired and magnified ; honour is but a shadow, a fancy, a wind, a breath, there is no internal excellency in it.

2. Beware of those attendants, or companions of honours, vain-glory, self-love, self-admiration. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory. Let us not exalt ourselves above others. Let us not study to be magnified by

God, and the people of God,) went and spread the letter before God : if we can but do likewise, we shall find unspeakable refreshments to our souls, and that will be a great argument of our innocency. "My friends scorn me," (saith Job,) "but mine eye poureth out tears unto God." "The mouth of the wicked," (saith David,) "and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me. But I give myself unto prayer."

10. We must bear reproaches fruitfully. Christians should not think it enough to free themselves from reproach, but they must improve it for good ; and to that end, consider what ends God aims at by it, and labour to work them upon ourselves. And we should draw what good instructions we can from the reproaches of others ; as thus, when I hear men reproach and revile others, "Oh! what a deal of evil is there secretly in the heart of man, that is not discovered till it have occasion ! Again, do I see another so vigilant over me, to find out any thing in me for which to reproach me ? How vigilant should I be over myself, to find out what is in me to humble me?"

SECT. VIII.

Of the Denial of our Life for Jesus Christ.

I HAVE done with the denial of natural self, in regard of well being, I now consider the denial of natural self, in regard of very being, and so it imports our life, together with the faculties and powers of nature, our understanding, will, affections, senscs, fleshly members ; all within us must be captivated to Christ, and all without us must endure to suffer for the name of Christ. 1. The understanding must be captivated, as it hinders from Christ. Suppose the word of Christ be contradicted or checked by reason. In this case, I must deny my reason, and believe Christ ; I must captivate my understanding to the obedience of faith. 2. The will must be renounced

in reference to Christ. Servants must not follow their own will, but their masters' directions. How much more ought we, who always may justly suspect ourselves, and can never suspect the will of Christ. It is meet that Hagar should stoop to Sarah, our will to Christ's will.

3. Our affections and senses must be denied, as they are cherishers of evil, or opposers of good. This latter is that “crucifying of the flesh, with the lusts and affections,” which the apostle mentions. But all these being within the compass of natural life, I shall only insist on that.

Life, as it is the gift, so it is the blessing of God; hence the promise of life, and of long life, is made to obedient children; and this turned into prayer by the believing parents, is usually called by the name of blessing. Yet we must deny it for God in these cases. 1. As a sacrifice. If God will rather be honoured by death, than by life, by the sufferings, than by the services of his saints, in this case, we should be willing to submit to God. Thus many of the martyrs, who had opportunity of flight, yet tarried to witness the truth, and gave their lives to the flames.

2. As a temptation. Thus, rather than sin, the primitive Christians, when apprehended, chose willingly to die. And if it be on this condition, that we may avoid sin, that by losing life we may go to Christ, whom we shall find with an infinite overplus, whatsoever we can lose for his sake; then we must deny life itself.

The directions of self-denial, in respect of our natural being, or life, are these: We must, 1. Apprehend God's love to our souls in his Son. He thought nothing too good for us: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;” and this he did for us “when we were enemies;” nay, God hath not only given us his Son for a Saviour, but he hath given us himself for an husband; let us often, by sad and solemn meditation, renew the sense of his love to us in Christ, and we cannot but give up all we have, and all we are, to God.

2. Maintain a godly jealousy over our own hearts; for

want of this, all the disciples fainted, (especially Peter,) and shamefully denied Christ. Memorable is that story of Pendleton and Sanders: Sanders as fearful he should not endure the fire. Pendleton seemed resolute; “Be not fearful, (saith he to Sanders,) for thou shalt see me and this fat flesh of mine fry in the fire before I will yield.” Yet he that was so strong in his own strength, fell away, and the other, so fearful, was enabled by God to burn for his truth.

3. Be acquainted with the promises made to self-denial; have always a word at hand to relieve ourselves in the worst of sufferings. Now these promises are of several sorts. 1. Of assistance: 2. Of acceptance: 3. Of reward. And again, the promises of reward are: 1. Of this life; “he that forsakes all for Christ, shall receive an hundred-fold;” the joy, the peace he shall have shall be an hundred times better than the comfort of these outward things. Oh! but (may some say,) what will become of my children? I shall leave them fatherless and helpless. To this, by way of answer, God often styles himself, “the Father of the fatherless;” and if of any fatherless, then surely of those whose parents have lost their lives for Jesus Christ. “Leave thy fatherless children,” (saith the Lord,) “I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me.” 2. Of eternal life; such “shall inherit eternal life.” “Be of good comfort,” (says Bradford to his fellow martyr,) “we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night.”—Christians! What would we have? The soul indeed is of a large capacity, all things here below can never satisfy it; but eternal life, the inheritance above, will fill the understanding with knowledge, and the will with joy; and that in so great a measure, that the expectation of the saints shall be exceeded? For “he shall be admired of them that believe.”

4. Mind the principle that must carry us through death, and make death itself honourable. We read, Heb. xi. that by faith some “quenched the violence of fire: others were tortured. They were stoned, they were

sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword ; and all this by faith.” Faith is the grace that enables us to deny ourselves ; yea, life itself. Other graces may do much, but faith hath the principal work in this. “ By faith ye stand,” said the apostle to his Corinthians : it is faith that makes a man stand in his greatest trials, and therefore, when Christ saw how Peter should be tempted, he tells him, that he had “ prayed that his faith should not fail ;” noting, that while his faith held, all would be sure.

SECT IX.

Of Self-denial, even with Regard to the Graces of God.

NOTWITHSTANDING these are God’s special gifts, yet we must deny them comparatively, and in some respects :—

1. In point of justification. It is a dangerous thing to hang the weight of a soul upon any thing which hath any mixture of weakness, imperfection, or corruption in it, as the purest of our duties have. It is a dangerous thing to teach that faith, or any other evangelical grace, as it is a work done by us, doth justify us. There is nothing to be called our righteousness, but “ The Lord our Righteousness.” Faith itself doth not justify *habitually*, as a thing fixed in us, but *instrumentally*, as that which receives the righteousness of Christ shining through it upon us, as the window enlightens by the sun-beams which it lets in, or as the cup feeds by the wine which it conveys. So then, in point of justification, we are to renounce all our duties and graces.

2. In point of sanctification : For we are to attribute the glory of all our graces and duties unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves. And yet understand we aright ; Though every believer is thus to deny himself in spiritual things, even in the point of sanctification, yet he is not to speak evil of the grace of God within himself ; he may not miscall his duties and graces, saying, These are no-

thing but the fruits of hypocrisy ; for then he should speak evil of the Spirit, whose works they are ; neither is he to trample on those graces of God. For a man to say, " All this is nothing but hypocrisy," that is not self-denial : properly, self-denial in spiritual things, as to the matter of justification, is to renounce all ; and as to the matter of sanctification, it is to attribute the strength and the glory of all unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to one's self.

The directions of self-denial in this respect, are these :

1. Let us be sensible of, and humbled for, our pride in spiritual things. There is nothing that a Christian is more apt to be proud of than spiritual things. It was Mr. Fox's speech, " As I get good by my sins, so I get hurt by my graces." It is a dangerous thing for any one to be proud of his duties and spiritual gifts ; we had better be proud of clothes, or friends, or honours ; for this pride of spiritual things is directly opposite to a man's justification. The first step to humility is, to see one's pride : the first step to self-denial is, to be convinced of one's desire after self-exalting, self-admiring, self-advancing. Oh ! what a proud heart have I ? What a self-advancing heart have I ? There is no believer, till he be fully renewed, but what hath something of self. We had need therefore to be jealous of ourselves ; and if at any time self break out, if at any time the soul begin to be advanced, in regard of duty or spiritual things, let us fall down before God, and humble ourselves for the pride of our hearts.

2. Let us have Christ in our eye. The more we see an humble Christ, a self-denying Christ, the more we shall learn humility and self-denial. Christ was the most eminent example of self-denial that ever was. " He thought it no robbery to be equal with God ; and yet he humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant." Was there ever such a self-denial as this ! Christians ! consider your Christ, and the more will you learn even in spiritual things.

3. Rest not on any thing below Jesus Christ. Neither grace, nor duties, nor holiness, are to be trusted in. We

must hold them fast in point of practice and obedience; but it is our sin and danger to hold them fast in reliance and confidence.—I desire to be rightly understood in this truth.—Some, because they need not rely on duties, let go their duties; they let prayer, and repentance, and sorrow for sin go; they say, “It is no matter for duties, they need not to trouble themselves, Christ hath done all.” This is to “turn the grace of God into wantonness.” We must let go both our graces and duties in point of justification, but hold them we must as our lives. Prayer, hearing, fasting, repenting, must not die whilst we live; do them we must, but glory in them we must not: we must not rest in any thing whatsoever below Jesus Christ.—I shall instance in these particulars :

1. We must not rest on our own preparations for duties. It is a commendable thing to prepare our hearts; we must pray that we may pray; we must have secret communion with our God, before we come to seek communion with him in a sermon. But we must not rest on our own preparation when we have prepared; if we advance that into the throne of Jesus Christ, and rest on that when we should only rest on him, it is the way to make all our preparations miscarry.

2. We must not rest on our enlargements in duties.—It may be we have a spring-tide of assistance comes in; a minister preaches with great presence of the Spirit of God, and a saint prays, (as we find,) in the Holy Ghost. He finds the Holy Spirit of God sending him from petition to petition, melting with brokenness when he is confessing sin, filling him with rejoicing when he is remembering mercy, raising him with an high wing (as it were,) of importunity when he is begging of favour; and now, as soon as the duty is done, it may be he goes away, and strokes himself,—“Oh! what an admirable prayer was here! Surely I shall do well this day!”—This is the very way to miscarry, thousands have found it; so that when he comes to pray again, it may be he prays most dully

and flatly, the Spirit is grieved and gone, and he can say little or nothing.

3. We must not rest on the comforts we have in duty, or after duty. It may be when we have been at duty, and have had some ravishments, oh! now we think our nest is built very high, and our rock is firm, and we shall go on vigorously. Chrysostom hath a saying to this purpose, "Methinks," (saith he,) "a saint when he comes from a sacrament, should be able to fly in the face of a devil, and though he walk in the midst of snares, yet he should be able to encounter them all." Comforts are very sweet things, and indeed strengthening things; "The joy of the Lord is our strength," saith Nehemiah. Nothing more animates the soul than joy; only here is the danger, if we rest on these joys and comforts; the Spirit of God is most choice and tender; it dwells in none but a clean, pure temple.

4. We must not rest on graces. This was Peter's fault; he had grace, and he rested on it: "Lord, though all forsake thee, yet will not I;" yet soon after Peter did forsake and deny his Master, and we do not find Peter so confident afterwards. When Christ said to him, "Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?" No comparative words were used now; no more than "Lord, thou knowest I love thee."

5. Be often putting forth new faith in Jesus Christ. Self-denial in spiritual things is not to be found in the law, but in the gospel. The law, though it hath use, (and we dare not but use it,) yet it will not make a man deny himself, but rather seek himself in spiritual things; "Obey and live," saith the law, "but if thou failest in any one point, thou art lost for ever;" in this case, (if there were no other way,) who would deny his own righteousness? Nay, who would not seek to save himself by his own righteousness? But now, saith the gospel, "By works thou canst not live; but if thou wilt throw down all thy own righteousness at the feet of Christ, and believe

on him, and rest only on him, thou shalt be saved." This will make a man to deny his own righteousness, and deny himself in spiritual things. Go we therefore to Christ, let us maintain believing apprehensions of the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is the humble, self-denying person that seeks justification, not by works, but by faith only.

6. Let it be the joy of our souls to exalt and set up Christ within our souls. Though in order to justification, we must deny our graces, eye Christ without us ; yet in order to sanctification we must have a care to see and feel Christ's kingdom within us, to set up Christ in our hearts, and to discern him ruling and commanding there as a king on his throne. And there is true self-denial in this, for wherever Christ reigns, there sin goes down. As the people would have all men put to death, which would not have Saul to reign over them ; so doth a true believing soul mortify whatsoever opposeth Christ's kingdom ; here moveth whatsoever may hinder Christ's spiritual dominion ; he makes all stoop for Christ's exaltation within him. Oh! then let Christ reign over all within us, in our understandings, as a prophet enlightening us ; in our wills, as a king commanding us ; in our affections, as a priest mortifying us ; in our loves, as a husband marrying us ; let the whole man be subject to whole Christ. This is the character of a true self-denier ; Christ rules within him, he every way subjects himself to Christ ; in his understanding, to know Christ ; in his will, to choose Christ ; in his thoughts, to meditate upon Christ ; in his fear, to serve and honour Christ ; in his faith, to trust and depend upon Christ ; in his love, to affect Christ ; in his joy, to delight in Christ ; in his desire, to long after Christ ; in his endeavours, to exalt Christ ; in all his duties, graces, gifts, abilities, to make them serviceable unto Christ. This is to attribute the glory of all our duties and graces to Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves. Now is Christ all in all ; now we truly deny ourselves.

OF

THE LIFE OF FAITH.



SECT. I.

Of the Nature of the Life of Faith.

TO live by faith, is by faith in Christ to possess the whole word of God as our own in all states and conditions, resting quietly upon his gracious and faithful promises, and yielding ourselves unto his good pleasure, in sincere, universal, and constant obedience. Or, to live by faith, is to feed upon the several promises of God made in his word, and to apply them to our own selves, according to our needs, and so to uphold, comfort, and encourage ourselves against all temptations, and unto every good duty. This life of faith is a very heaven upon earth, a sweet sanctuary to any hunted soul; hereby our hearts will be cheered, our life will be sweet to us, God will be glorified, and the glory of his truth advanced. O blessed duty!

That we may live by faith, we must endeavour two things. 1. To get matter for our faith to work upon. 2. To exercise our faith aright in the work. In order to the former, we must observe three things: (1.) That we store up all the good promises of God, and our own

experiences. (2.) That we lay in promises of all kinds. We had better leave than lack. It is the wisdom of a man that he may not live feebly and poorly, but to have somewhat to spare. (3.) That we so lay them up, that we may have them at hand. It is a folly to say, "I have as good provision as can be, but I have it not here;" "Let the Word of God dwell in you plenteously and richly in all wisdom."

That we may exercise our faith aright in the work, we must observe these directions :

1. Take possession of the promises, and value them as your own. There is no godly man or woman but is a great heir. Whensoever they look in God's book, and find there any promise, they may make it their own. Just as an heir that rides over divers fields and meadows, saith, "This meadow is my heritage, and this corn-field is my heritage." And when he sees a fair house, he saith, "This fair house is my heritage." And he looks upon them with another manner of eye than a stranger that rides over those fields. A carnal heart reads those promises but merely as stories, not as having any interest in them ; but a godly man, every time he reads the Scriptures, (remember this when you are reading the Scriptures,) and there meets with a promise, ought to lay his hand upon it, and say, "This is a part of my heritage ; it is mine, and I am to live upon it."

2. Expect nothing from the promise but that which is suitable to the nature of it. Some promises are absolute, which God hath simply determined to accomplish ; as the promise of the Messiah, Isa. vii. 14 ; and of the calling of the gentiles, Rom. xi. 26. Some promises are conditional, which God will accomplish in his own time, and in his own manner and measure ; the things included in them are no farther promised than God seeth to be most meet for his glory, and our good ; as all temporal blessings, less principal graces, and the measure of all sanctifying graces. Now in all these we should expect nothing from them but that which is suitable to the nature thereof.

3. We should eye that particular good in the promise which we stand in need of, and set God's power and faithfulness, and wisdom on work, to bring it about. For instance, thou art in persecution, and either thou wouldest have deliverance out of it, or comfort and refreshment in it. In this case, see all this in the promise, (referring the order, and time, and manner to God,) and then set God's power and faithfulness on work that can do it, and his wisdom to contrive it, which way he knows best: this is the meaning of that text, "Commit thy ways unto the Lord, trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass."

4. By faith wait upon God, in that way he hath appointed. It is true God will work that good for us, yet we must use the means, and meet God in the course of his promise, otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises and all.

5. Set it down, that God will do whatsoever he hath promised, and we shall receive it in the ways of his Providence. This is the very work of faith itself, thus it draws sap and virtue from the promise, when it concludes, that, according to the good in the promise, it is sure to be done.

6. But imagine the Lord doth not soon accomplish his Word, then must faith take up its stand, and stay till it come: "He that believeth maketh not haste, the vision is for an appointed time, and therefore wait for it." So the Psalmist, "As the eyes of a servant look to the hands of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us;" not "until we will," or until we see it fit, but "until he will have mercy upon us."

7. Imagine the Lord not only delays, but seems to frown, and to say, He will not hear. In this case, with an holy humility contend with God, for the Lord loves to be overcome thus. When Jacob wrestled with God, "Let me go," saith the Lord; "I will not let thee go," saith Jacob. So do we take hold on the Lord Jesus, and

strive with him, and leave him not, till we have those comforts he hath promised. Surely this is the glory, and victory, and triumph of faith, when the Lord is, as it were, fain to lay down his weapons, and to yield himself as conquered : “ Thy name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel ; because thou hast prevailed with God.”

SECT. II.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in particular, as in temporal Evils.

In particular, that we may live by faith, observe we—
1. The promises. 2. The exercise of faith concerning the promises. We begin with temporal evils. (1.) The promises to prevent afflictions you may read in the Word, and they are these, and the like : Psal. xci. 10, cxxi. 7 ; Job v. 19 ; Zech. ii. 5 ; where the Lord promises to be a wall of fire to his people ; (not of stone or brass, saith Theodoret,) that it may both fray afar off, and keep off a hand ; protect them, and destroy their enemies. (2.) The promises to qualify evils, are these, and the like : Psal. ciii. 13, 14 ; Isa. xlix. 13, 14, 15 ; Hos. xi. 8, 9. In this last promise, God imitates parents, says Theodoret : when any misery is upon their child, their bowels yearn more ; never sits the child so much on the mother’s lap, never lies so much in her bosom, as when he is sick. Is there, or can there be, any richer or fuller expression of Tully than there is in the apostle’s Greek, where there is both an elegant antithesis, and double hyperbole, beyond Englishing, Καὶ ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν : for affliction, glory ; for light affliction, heavy, massy, substantial glory, a weight of glory ; for momentary affliction, eternal glory : nay, the apostle adds degrees of comparison, yea, goes beyond all degrees, calling it more excellent, far more excellent, exceeding, excessive, eternal weight of glory,

2 Cor. iv. 17. (3.) The promises to enable us to bear them, or in due time to remove them, are these, and the like : *Psal. xxxvii. 24 ; Jer. xxix. 11 ; Mic. vii. 8, 9 ; Psal. xcvi. 11.* As sure as harvest follows a seeding, so to the righteous comfort follows mourning, *Job xvi. 20 ; 1 Cor. x. 13.*

For sickness. 1. The promises to prevent it, are these, and the like, *Exod. xv. 26 ; Deut. vii. 15 ; Psal. xci. 10.* 2. Promises to qualify sickness, are these, and the like, *Psal. xli. 3 ; Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8.* 3. Promises to remove sickness, are these, and the like, *Exod. xxiii. 25 ; Deut. vii. 15.*

For poverty, we may store up these promises, *Psal. xxiii. throughout, xxxiv. 9, 10, xxxvii. 25 ; Heb. xiii. 5.* The wicked indeed may have more abundance than the Christian, but here is the difference ; the wicked have all by a Providence, the Christian hath all by a promise : and this distinction the poor Christian would not part with for a world of gold.

For famine, we may store up these promises, *Job. v. 19, 20 ; Psal. xxxiii. 18, 19 ; Prov. x. 2, 3 ; Psal. xxxvii. 18, 19 ; Isa. xli. 17, 18.* Some martyrs being cast into prison, and denied necessary food, they had faith to return this answer, “ If men will give us no meat, we believe God will give us no stomach.”

For war, captivity, and oppression, we may gather up these promises, and the like, *Job v. 20 ; Prov. iii. 24, 25, 26 ; Jer. xxxix. 17, 18 ; Deut. xxx. 3, 4,* which very promise Nehemiah sueth out, *Neh. i. 9 ; Psal. cvi. 46 ; Ezek. xi. 16 ; Psal. xii. 5, lxviii. 5, cxlii. 7, 8, 9.*

II. For the exercise of faith, concerning these promises, that we may live by them, use meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider, (1.) That all affliction comes from God : “ Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it ?—I form the light, and I create darkness ; I make peace, and create evil : I the Lord do all these things.” (2.) That as God sends it, so none can

deliver us out of it but God : “ O, our God, wilt thou not judge them ? We have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.” This meditation draws the heart from repose, in means or friends ; it expels vexation and distracting cares, and estrangeth from the use of unlawful means of deliverance : “ The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.” (3.) The cause of all miseries and sorrow is sin, and therefore it is time to examine our ways, to humble ourselves, and to set upon reformation. (4.) That now God trieth our faith, patience, and meekness. He hath said unto crosses, “ Go ye to such a man, not to weaken his faith, or to waste any grace of the Spirit, but to purge him, refine him, try him, exercise him, to breed the quiet fruits of righteousness.” This meditation makes the heart willingly, freely, and constantly to resign itself to the good pleasure of God in all things. (5.) That it is God’s will we should use all lawful means of help which God in his providence affords ; but in point of dependence, that we solely rest on God’s promises. Faith coupleth the means and the end, but looketh to the Promiser, (whose truth, and wisdom, and power, and mercy, never fail,) and not to the probability of the thing promised.

2. For prayer, observe this method : We must, (1,) Lay open our sorrow before the Lord, pour out our complaints into his bosom. (2.) Confess our sins with hatred and godly sorrow. For want of this, God threatened the Israelites, “ I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences.” (3.) Direct we our supplications to our God : “ Lord, how long wilt thou look on ? O rescue my soul from their destruction, my darling from the lions.” (4.) Then press we the Lord with his promises : Lord, thou hast said, “ The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous.” Thou hast said, “ Yet a little while, and the indignation shall cease.” These are thy promises ; Lord, make them effectual to my poor soul. (5.) For conclusion, tell we the Lord,

whatever becomes of us we will trust in him : “ Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.” These are the acts of faith by which it puts forth, and exerciseth itself in time of affliction.

SECT III.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith, in temporal Blessings.

CONCERNING temporal blessings, the general promises are these, and the like, 1 Tim. iv. 8 ; Psal. xxxiv. 8, 9, lxxxiv. 11 ; Phil. iv. 19 ; 1 Cor. iii. 21. “ All things are yours,” we are heirs of all the world.

The special promises have a relation, some to our name, some to our bodies, some to our estates, some to our callings. 1. Those promises that have a relation to our good name, are such as these, 1 Sam. ii. 30 ; Prov. iii. 16, iv. 8, xiv. 19 ; Isa. lvi. 3, 4, 5. 2. Those promises that have a relation to our bodies, are either for long life, concerning which, Deut. v. 16, 33, Prov. iii. 1, 2 ; or for health, concerning which, Prov. iii. 8 ; Psal. ciii. 3, 4, 5 : or for safety, concerning which, Prov. i. 33 ; Job xi. 8 ; Hos. ii. 18 ; Job v. 23 : or for peace, concerning which, Lev. xxvi. 6 ; Psal. xxix. 11, xxxvii. 11 ; Prov. xvi. 16 : or for sleep, concerning which, Job xi. 19 ; Prov. iii. 24 : or for food, concerning which, Psal. xxxvii. 3, exi. 5 ; Joel ii. 26 : or for raiment, concerning which, Deut. x. 18 ; Matt. vi. 25, 30, 32 : or for posterity, the fruit of the body, concerning which, Deut. vii. 12, 13, 14. 3. These promises that have relation to our estates, are these, Job xxii. 24, 25 ; Prov. viii. 18, 19 ; Psal. xxxvii. 5. 4. Those promises that have a relation to our calling, are either for plenty, concerning which, Prov. x. 4, xii. 11, xiii. 4, xxviii. 19 : or for protection, concerning which, Psal. xci. 11 : or for promotion, concerning which, Prov. xii. 24, xxii. 29 : or for good success, concerning which, Prov. xii. 14 ; Isa. lxv. 21, 23. I deny not but the wicked

may enjoy all these temporal blessings by a general Providence, but only the just have a spiritual right to them ; they only have them as encouragements of their righteousness, as testimonies of God's love and care over them, and by virtue of a promise.

For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, observe that we may live by them, either in the want, or in the enjoyment of these temporal mercies.

1. In the *want* of them, we should go to meditation and prayer.

For Meditation. 1. Consider, " If thou return to the Almighty thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put iniquity far from thy tabernacles : then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks." This advice faith digests, and labours the reformation of what is amiss, and whatsoever hinders the promises. 2. That faith is painful, provident, and frugal ; it shakes off idleness, takes the opportunity, husbands thriftily, and observes God's providence in all affairs, otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises. 3. That faith preserves from the use of all unlawful means. The believer consults ever what is truly just, not what is gainful ; or what may be compassed by honest courses, not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, or the like carnal dealings : " Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right." 4. That faith leans upon the providence of God, who will keep back nothing from us but what is hurtful and pernicious. Here is a sweet act of faith, it submits to God's wisdom, and rests on his providence, after the use of all lawful means ; and this maintains a Christian in true contentment.

For prayer, observe this method : We must, 1, confess our sins, especially those sins which upon search we are persuaded hinder prosperity. 2. Importune the Lord for his temporal blessings, so far as he seeth them to be for our good, and for the glory of his great name. 3. Then press the Lord with his promises, as with so many arguments : Lord, thou hast said, " Godliness hath the promise

of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.” Thou hast said, “ Fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him.” These are thy promises, make them good to us as it stands best with thy wisdom.

II. In the *enjoyment* of these temporal blessings, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider, (1,) Faith in prosperity keeps the heart in a holy temper, in humility, meekness, tenderness, and compassion towards others; in thankfulness, obedience, and in the fear of the Lord. Satan himself could reply to the Lord, “ Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made a hedge about him?” In this case faith will remember a man of his duty, and persuade him to be so much the more serviceable, as God’s mercies are more plentiful upon him. (2.) That faith makes a man heavenly-minded in the possession of a prosperous estate; as it receives all earthly blessings from God, so it raises the soul to God again. Faith considers these things as pledges of God’s love, as parts of our child’s portion, and so it makes us look at the better part, those never-fading riches which God hath reserved in heaven for all that fear him. (3.) That faith breeds a godly jealousy, lest the heart should be drawn away with the pleasing delights of things transitory; for by grace it is that we are conscious of our own weakness, and of the snare that is in every creature to entangle us. Prosperity is pleasing, but dangerous; as man may quickly surfeit of sweet-meats. This makes the waking believer circumspect, watchful, and jealous; and suspicious of his own heart, lest he miscarry in prosperity, considering there is a snare in it. (4.) That faith minds a change even when our mountains seem strongest.

2. For prayer, observe this method: (1.) Acknowledge God’s mercy both in his promises and performances; say, “ Lord, thou hast promised that no good thing wilt thou withhold from them that walk uprightly; and surely thou art true in thy sayings. I believe by virtue of thy

promises I enjoy this land, and those goods. I have nothing, Lord, but merely of free grace, and by virtue of a promise.” (2.) Importune the Lord for sanctification of prosperity, and for God’s blessings upon the means. The more we prosper, the more earnest should the prayers of faith be ; for of ourselves we have no power to wield a good estate well, no ability to preserve or keep it. In greatest wealth we lie open to many temptations, and if we pray not earnestly that God may sanctify all his temporal blessings to us, we shall cool in grace. (3.) Praise God for his mercies, and devote ourselves unto him from whom we have received all.

SECT. IV

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Evils.

EVILS spiritual arise either from the devil, or the flesh, or the world, or from man, or God, or from our own selves. 1. Those evils that arise from the devil, are temptations of several sorts ; and the man whose heart is upright, shall find strength enough against every temptation. To that purpose, consider these promises, Matt. xvi. 18 ; 1 Cor. x. 13 ; 1 John v. 18. 2. Those evils that arise from the flesh, are lusts or temptations of uncleanness ; and for strength and ability against such a temptation, consider these promises, Prov. ii. 10, 11, 16 ; Eccles. vii. 26 ; 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. 3. Those evils that arise from the world, are covetousness, cares, evil company ; and for strength against such, consider these promises, 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17, 18 ; Gal. i. 4 ; 1 John v. 4 ; Heb. xiii. 5, ε μη σε ανω, εδ’ ε μη σε εγκαλαλιωω.—There are five negatives together in the original that strongly affirm ; as if he had said, “ I tell thee, I will never, never, never, never, never forsake thee.” 4. Those evils that arise from men, are either oppositions against truth, concerning which, Matt. x. 19, Acts xviii. 9, 10 ; or oppositions against goodness,

Matt. v. 10, 1 Pet. iii. 14; or oppositions against both, and so they fall either on our good nature, concerning which, Psal. xxxvii. 6, where howsoever thy innocency be at some times covered with a thick and dark mist of slander and oppression, yet the Lord will in his good time scatter and dissolve the mist, and so make thy innocency apparent to the world; yea, he will make thy righteousness as evident as the sun when it ariseth; yea, as noon-day, when it is at highest, and shines brightest, Psal. lxviii. 13; Matt. v. 11, 12; 1 Pet. iv. 14, &c.: or they may fall on us in respect of our liberty, concerning which, Psal. lxix. 32, 33, cii. 19, 20; Rev. ii. 10: or they may deprive us of our goods, concerning which, 2 Chron. xxv. 9; Matt. xix. 29; Hab. iii. 17, 18: or they may take away life, concerning which, Matt. x. 39; John. xii. 25; Rev. xiv. 13. 5. Those evils which arise from God, are desertions; and for comforts against them, consider these promises, Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16, liv. 7, 8, l. 10. 6. Those evils that arise from ourselves are sins and infirmities, and they are either spiritual blindness, concerning which, Luke iv. 18; 1 John ii. 27; Isa. xxxv. 4, 5: or spiritual lameness, concerning which, Isa. xxxv. 6, xl. 31: or heaviness of mind, concerning which, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2; Jer. xxx. 15, 16, 17: or weakness of memory, concerning which, John xiv. 26: or fears of losing God's love, concerning which, Isa. lxix. 15, liv. 10; Jer. xxxiii. 20; Psal. lxxxix. 33, 34, 35; John xiii. 1; Rom. xi. 29: or indisposition, distraction, defects in our best performances, concerning which, Numb. xxiii. 21; Cant. ii. 14: or particular falls, daily frailties and infirmities, concerning which, Isa. lv. 7; Jer. iii. 1; Psal. xxxvii. 24, cxlv. 14; Hosea xiv. 4; 1 John i. 9.

2. For the exercising of faith, concerning these promises that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer. And for meditation, consider, 1, That of ourselves we cannot resist these spiritual evils; all our comfort is, that neither the devil, nor the world, nor the flesh, nor sin can oppose any farther than God will give them leave; not

the devil himself can tempt whom he will, nor how long he will, but in all these he is confined by the providence of God. 2. That faith fortifies the soul against all oppositions, the more they rage, the more faith heartens the soul to believe, and to keep close under the shadow of the Lord's wings. As the child affrighted, clings faster to the mother; so the poor soul pursued by the devil, or world, or flesh, or man, or God, or our own corruptions, runs to Christ, and in his name resists all these evils, and in his name gets the victory.

For prayer, observe this method : 1. Confess sins of former ignorance, vanity of mind, self-confidence, mis-interpreting of the Lord's doings, &c. which set open the soul to all other spiritual evils. 2. Importune the Lord for pardon of sin, and for help against all oppositions. 3. Then press the Lord with his promises, as with so many arguments : "Lord, thou hast said, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against us : that whoso pleaseth God, shall escape the strange woman : that whosoever is born of God overcometh the world : that if we suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are we : that in a little wrath thou didst hide thy face for a moment, but with everlasting kindness wilt have mercy :"—These are precious promises ! "Now, Lord, make them good to my soul ; let me draw virtue from each of these promises ; let not a word of these promises fall to the ground ; let me have a share, and part, and portion in these comfortable promises, through the Lord Jesus."

SECT. V.

*Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Blessings,
as derived to us from God and Christ, and the Spirit
of Christ.*

1. FROM God proceeds his love of us,—presence with us,—providence over us. 1. Concerning his love of us, we have these promises, Deut. vii. 7, 8, 13 ; Isa. liv. 8 ; Jer. xxxi. 3 ; Hosea ii. 19, and xiv. 4 ; John iii. 16 ;

Eph. ii. 4; 1 John iv. 19. 2. Concerning his presence with us, we have these promises, Gen. xxvi. 24, and xxviii. 15; Exod. iii. 12; Joshua i. 5; Jer. i. 8; 1 Chron. xxviii. 20; Isaiah xli. 10; Matt. xxviii. 20; Rev. ii. 1. 3. Concerning his providence over us, we have these promises; Psa. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11, 12; Job xxxvi. 7; Zech. ii. 8.

2. From Christ we have promises, 1. Of his person, in Genesis iii. 15; where was the first promise, and the foundation of all other promises, because God intended to make good every promise in Christ. 2. Of the benefits that flow from him. Of redemption, Tit. ii. 14; Eph. i. 7; Gal. iii. 13; Heb. ix. 12. Of vocation, we have these promises, Acts ii. 39; Rom. viii. 30. Of justification, Isa. liii. 11; Acts xiii. 39; Rom. viii. 33. Of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Eph. ii. 14, 16; Col. i. 21, 22. Of adoption, Gal. iii. 26; John i. 12; Rom. ix. 26; Gal. iv. 4, 5, 7.

3. From the Spirit of Christ we have promises of the Spirit himself, and of the operation of the Spirit. Of the Spirit himself, Joel ii. 28, 29; Acts ii. 17, 18; John xiv. 16, 17; Eph. i. 13; Gal. iii. 14. Of the operation of the Spirit, and that both in general, as for sanctification: concerning which we have these promises, Micah vii. 19; Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Heb. viii. 10, and x. 16; 1 Thess. v. 23; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5. And as to special graces and duties, concerning these we shall speak presently.

For the exercise of faith concerning the promises, that we may live by them, we must use meditation and prayer. For the former, consider these things: 1. That faith (considering the privileges of God's children) admires and adores, "Oh! how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!" 2. That faith (on this account) rests upon God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, to receive whatsoever may be good and profitable to the soul: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." What

can they want, who have God for their Father, Christ for their Saviour, the Spirit for their Sanctifier ? 3. That faith hereupon sets an high price upon Christ, upon God in Christ, upon the Spirit of Christ. These promises are of more worth than kingdoms, empires, the whole world. Pleasures, profits, honours, all are vain and empty, and nothing is to be rested on, but Jesus Christ ; yea, there is a full content in Jesus Christ. 4. Faith in these promises doth greatly enlarge the heart towards God, and stirreth it up to earnest study of holiness ; if a Christian be much in the meditation of God's singular goodness in Christ, it will even constrain him to yield up himself wholly to God, in all manner of godly conversation. 5. Faith ever runs to these promises in all straits, and here it finds comfort. Where can it take up a surer and safer refuge than with God and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ ? Indeed, God it dares not look at but in Christ ; and the Spirit proceeds not but from Christ, to Christ therefore it runs immediately. It is Christ, " who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." " Come, (says faith) let us go to Christ, and if he receive us not presently, let us stay a little ; he is full of bowels and tenderness towards poor sinners ; he keeps open house for all comers ; he invites all, entertains all, old sinners, young sinners, great sinners, less sinners ; his promise is sure too : him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

For prayer, observe this method : 1. Confess and acknowledge God's mercies both in his promises and performances. 2. Pray for this increase of faith, and for a farther and farther sight of this belief ; " Give me, gracious Father, to believe as thou hast promised ; create in me the hand of faith, and make it stronger and stronger, that I may effectually receive what in mercy thou reachest forth ; and then give me the spirit of revelation, that I may discern truly what thou hast given me, that my lips may sing of thy praise all the day long." 3. Praise God for his mercies, and quietly rest in the promises : " Oh !

Lord, thou hast freely loved, and redeemed, and sanctified my soul ; Oh ! how should I praise thee ! Lord, thou hast given Christ for my wisdom and sanctification, as well as for righteousness and redemption : Lord, thou hast appointed Christ to be the beginner and finisher of my holiness, and surely he will not leave the work imperfect, whereunto he is ordained of the Father. Were the progress of this building committed to my care and oversight, there might be cause of fear ; but since thou hast laid all upon Christ, my only and all-sufficient Redeemer, Lord, increase my faith, that I may hold him fast and be safe, and so at last may sing hallelujahs to thee in heaven for ever and ever."

SECT. VI.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Graces.

THE operation of the Spirit appears in spiritual graces, and spiritual duties.

Of graces ; the first is faith, of which we find promises, 1. Of it, Eph. ii. 8 ; John vi. 37. Observe here these promises of assurance, the highest measure of faith, Psa. l. 23 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 30 ; Isa. lx. 16 ; Psa. xcvi. 11. 2. To it, 2 Chron. xx. 20 ; Prov. xxix. 25 ; Isa. xxvi. 3 ; Acts x. 43 ; Rom. viii. 4 ; Acts xiii. 39 ; John i. 12, vii. 38, iii. 16, 36, v. 24, and vi. 47. The second is hope, and we find promises, 1. Of it, Psa. lxv. 4 ; Prov. xiv. 32 ; Job xiii. 15. 2. To it, Psa. xl. 4 ; Rom. iv. 18, 22, viii. 24. The third is joy, and we find promises, 1. Of it, Psa. xxxvi. 8, 9, lxiv. 10, lxviii. 3, xcvi. 11, cxviii. 15 ; Isa. xii. 2, 3, xxxv. throughout ; lvi. 7, lxvi. 13, 14 ; John xvi. 22 ; Rom. xiv. 17. 2. To it, Psa. lxxxix. 15, 16. The fourth is love, especially of God, and we may find promises, 1. Of it, Cant. i. 4 ; Deut. xxx. 6. 2. To it, Psa. xci. 14, cxlv. 20 ; Prov. viii. 21 ; Deut. vii. 9 ; 1 Cor. viii. 3, ii. 9, 10 ; James i. 12, ii. 5. The fifth is fear,

and we find promises, 1. Of it, Jer. xxxii. 39, 40 ; Hos. iii. 5. 2. To it, Psa. ciii. 11, xxxi. 19, cxlvii. 11 ; Mal. iii. 16, 17. The sixth is obedience, and we find promises, 1. Of it, Ezek. xi. 19, 20, xxxvi. 26, 27. 2. To it, Deut. xxviii. 1, 2, to 14. The seventh is repentance, and we find promises, 1. Of it, Acts v. 30, 31 ; Ezek. xi. 19, xx. 43, xxxvi. 31. 2. To it, Mal. iii. 7 ; Isa. lv. 7 ; 2 Chron. vii. 14 ; Isa. i. 16, 17, 18 ; Job xxxiii. 27, 28 ; Jer. iv. 14. The eight is humility, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5 ; Gal. v. 22. 2. To it, Prov. xv. 33, xxii. 4 ; James iv. 6 ; 1 Pet. v. 5 ; Isa. lvii. 15 ; Matt. v. 3. The ninth is meekness, and we find promises, 1. Of it, Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8 ; Gal. v. 22, 23. 2. To it, Psa. xxxvii. 1, cxlvii. 6 ; Isa. xxix. 19 ; Psa. xxv. 9 ; Zeph. ii. 3 ; Matt. v. 5, and xi. 29 ; Psa. cxlix. 4. The tenth is patience, and we find promises, 1. Of it, James i. 5. 2. To it, Heb. x. 36, James v. 11. The eleventh is zeal, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, Jer. xx. 9 ; 2 Cor. vii. 11. 2. To it, Num. xxv. 12, 13 ; Rev. iii. 19, 20. The twelfth is perseverance, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, Psa. lxxxix. 28 ; Prov. xii. 3 ; Isa. xlvi. 4. 2. To it, Matt. x. 22 ; Rev. ii. 26.

The degrees of graces follow ; and we find some promises, 1. Thereof, Isaiah xliv. 3, 4 ; Mal. iv. 2 ; Psa. lxxxiv. 7 ; Prov. iv. 18. 2. Thereto, Rom. xiii. 11 ; 2 Pet. i. 8.

For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, we must apply to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider, 1. That of ourselves we have no ability to attain any of these graces : every one can say, "I purpose well ;" but the question is, whether they build not on their own strength ? Many a man (especially in time of his sickness, danger, disgrace) will make fair promises of amendment, but when the rod is removed, all is forgotten : what may be the reason ? He stands on his own feet, he presumes to go of himself, and then no marvel if he falls. If we will have any of

these graces, then deny we ourselves : “ I will keep thy statutes,” said David : but immediately he cries, “ Oh ! forsake me not utterly ! ” Purposes thus grounded, bring forth holy performances :—but of ourselves we can expect nothing. 2. That God’s Spirit will infuse these graces and the increase of these graces into them that believe. Many would fain have hope and joy, but they exercise not their faith to believe God in his promises. It is good to believe, that (according to his promise) God, on our applying to him, will sanctify our natures, enable us to attain holiness, and bestow all his graces on us. 3. That for the degrees of these graces, it is necessary to improve them. God ever bestows the greatest measure where he finds a care to put them forth to advantage : “ Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.” As men increase their substance by labour, and learning by diligence, so he that improves graces, shall more and more abound in them.

2. For prayer, observe this method : 1. Acknowledge your inability : “ O Lord, I have no grace by nature; I have no power to cleanse my own heart. O Lord, I have defaced thine image, but I cannot repair it ; I may say with the apostle, when I would do well, evil is present with me, but I find no means to perfect what I desire : Oh ! when shall I be set at liberty, that I might do the work of God, and run the race of his commandments ; Oh ! that I had faith, and hope, and joy, and love ! ” 2. Look up to the power, and grace, and truth of God, and press him therewith : “ Lord, I have heard of thy power, thou callest the things that are not, as if they were ; thou canst if thou wilt, work in me these graces, as thou didst gloriously create them in Adam. Lord, I have heard also of thy grace and truth, thou art as faithful to keep, as free to make these precious promises. Thy grace is unsearchable, thy word purer than silver seven times refined. Oh ! make good thy promises ! I press thee with thy power, grace, and truth ! Oh ! replenish me with thy graces ! ” 3. Look on the promises, and pray by them,

or turn them into prayer. Faith hearkeneth what the Lord speaketh, and speaketh back again in fervent groans and desires to whatsoever it heareth : hence we can make no prayer in boldness, faith, or comfort, but for things promised, and in that manner as they are promised. Thus Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 9, and David, 2 Sam. vii. 27, 28, 29, prayed by a promise, and thus should we pray by a promise, and then we may be sure we pray according to his will.

SECT. VII.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in Spiritual Duties.

THE first duty is prayer, to which are affixed these promises, Psa. v. 3, x. 17, lxv. 2; Prov. xv. 29; Psa. l. 15, cii. 17, 18, 19, 20; Zech. xiii. 8, 9; Rom. viii. 26, 27; James v. 15. The second is praise, to which are affixed these promises, 1 Sam. ii. 30; Psa. l. 23, lxviii. 3—6. The third is preaching, to which Matt. xxviii. 20; John v. 25. The fourth is reading the word, to which Psa. xix. 8; Prov. i. 4. The fifth is fasting, to which James iv. 9, 10; Matt. vi. 18. The sixth is meditation, to which Psa. i. 2; Prov. xiv. 22; Phil. iv. 8, 9. The seventh is examination, to which 1 Cor. xi. 31; Gal. vi. 4. The eighth is sanctification of the Lord's day, to which Isa. lviii. 13, 14, lvi. 2; Jer. xvii. 26. The ninth is reproof, to which Prov. xxiv. 25; xxviii. 23. The tenth is alms-giving, to which Psal. xli. 1, 2, 3; Luke xiv. 13, 14. The eleventh is waiting on God, to which Isa. xl. 31, lxiv. 4, xlxi. 23.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, we must have recourse to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider: 1. That God deals graciously with his people. He might, out of his absolute

sovereignty, command only, and we should be bound to obey in every one of these duties ; but he is pleased (the better to quicken us to obedience) to annex these gracious promises. 2. That as he is gracious to us, so we should be cheerful in our duties to him : this cheerfulness of service is the very first fruit of faith ; “ By faith Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, an offering to the Lord.” By faith David “ went with the multitude unto the house of God, with the voice of joy and of praise.”

2. For prayer, observe this method : 1. Acknowledge the goodness and free grace of God in these promises : “ O Lord, why shouldst thou allure me to that which I am every way bound to ? If I had none of these promises, I have already in hand a world of mercies, which infinitely bind me to duty ; and wilt thou yet add this and that promise to this and that duty ? Oh ! miracle of mercies ! Oh ! the goodness of God !” 2. Bewail your own dulness and sloth to the duty : “ And yet (O Lord) how dull, and remiss, and slight am I in the practice of this or that duty ? Thou hast said, ‘ Cursed is the man that doth the work of the Lord negligently ! ’ Oh ! then what is my portion ? No marvel if I feel no power, no sweetness in the ordinances whilst I deal partially, hear perfunctorily, pray coldly, and do not labour to feed on the promise. O Lord, thou lovest a cheerful giver, but my services are maimed, corrupt, dead, superficial, and very uncheerful.” 3. Importune the Lord to quicken your dead heart to the duty ; so prays David, “ Teach me to do thy will ; thy Spirit is good, lead me in the land of uprightness ;” so prays the church, “ Draw me, and we will run after thee ;” and so let us pray, “ Give me a cheerful heart in thy service, enliven my heart by thy blessed Spirit, give me to do what thou requirest, incline my heart to thy statutes.” 4. Implore the assistance of God’s Spirit to every good duty, beg acceptance of your persons and performances in the Lord Jesus Christ, press

him with his promises to incline to duties, and to reward duties ; and whatever duty you do, press him with that especial promise belonging unto it. Thus if we meditate and pray, and pray and meditate, we may live by faith, in reference to spiritual duties.

SECT VIII.

Of the Manner of the Life of Faith in Things eternal.

1. CONCERNING damnation, or eternal confusion, we have these promises against it, Isaiah xlv. 17 ; Rom. viii. 1. 2. Concerning salvation, we have these promises for it, Rom. vi. 23 ; 1 Thess. iv. 17. God hath promised us a kingdom, Matt. xxv. 34 ; an heavenly kingdom, Matt. vii. 21 ; an eternal kingdom, 2 Pet. i. 11 ; a crown of life, James i. 12 ; a crown of righteousness, 2 Tim. iv. 8 ; an immarcessible crown of glory, 1 Pet. v. 4.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, we must use meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider, (1.) That faith in the precious promises of eternal life quiets and cheers the heart in the midst of discouragements. (2.) That fulness of glory is reserved for the life to come ; but the beginnings of glory, as peace, joy, sanctification, are vouchsafed here. Grace is the beginning of glory, and now as grace grows, so we enter upon the possession of our inheritance. (3.) Faith earnestly desires and longs after full glory. “Ourselves also which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.”

2. For prayer, observe this method : (1.) Confess we our former carelessness about entering upon this inheritance : “O Lord, I have slighted thy promises, I have

neglected the motions of thy Holy Spirit, I have not carefully improved the gifts received, I have not laboured more and more to be sealed with the promised Spirit. Ah, Lord! what a dwarf am I in holiness! by reason of my sloth, the powers of grace are so feeble, that I can scarce breathe or sigh in the way to heaven.” (2.) Pray that the Lord would increase our faith, seal us by his Spirit, lead us in the way of peace, cause us to grow up in holiness, make us wise to prize and value, to taste and relish, the very joys of heaven; and above all, that he would assure our consciences of our right and title thereto. (3.) Praise God for his promises of eternal life: “O Lord, thou hast looked on my base estate, and visited me with mercy from on high; of a stranger and foreigner, thou hast made me a free denizen of the new Jerusalem. Now I see, I read it in thy precious promises, that my name is registered in heaven; an eternal weight of glory is reserved for me; heaven is my home, my hope, my inheritance: oh! where should my heart be, but where my treasure is? Oh! the incomprehensible love and favour of my dear Lord! What a mercy is this? What promises are these? My soul rejoiceth in thee, my God, my spirit shall bless thy name for ever and ever!”

SECT. IX.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith, in Regard of others.

We have done with the promises that concern ourselves. Now follow such special promises as we find in Holy Writ concerning others; and they have reference either to our own family, to godly society farther enlarged, or to the church of Christ.

1. The members of our family are, husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant. (1.) For the husband and wife, they have promises from the Lord, Psalm

cxxviii; Prov. xxxi. 28, xi. 16; Job v. 25. (2.) For parent and child God hath made a gracious covenant with them, Gen. xvii. 7, 9; Acts ii. 39; Jer. xxxii. 39; Prov. xx. 7. Good parents, (though poor,) leave their children a good patrimony, for they have laid up many prayers for them in heaven, and they leave God's favour for their possession, and his promises for a sure inheritance, Psalm xxxvii. 25, 26; Prov. xi. 21; Psalm cxii. 2, xxv. 13, xxxvii. 29; Prov. xiii. 22; Isa. xliv. 3, 4, liv. 13. And children obeying their parents have these promises, Exod. xx. 12; Eph. vi. 2; Jer. xxxv. 18, 19; Prov. i. 8, 9, vi. 20. (3.) For master and servant, they have sweet promises, Prov. iii. 33; Job viii. 6; Prov. xiv. 11; especially the servant that is truly obedient, Col. iii. 23, 24; 1 Pet. ii. 19.

Here consider magistrates, Deut. xvii. 19, 20; Psalm cxxxii. 18: and ministers, Psalm cv. 15; Rev. ii. 1; Isa. xl ix. 4.

2. Godly society, (out of our own families,) hath precious promises, as Prov. xii. 20; Mal. iii. 16, 17; Matt. xviii. 20.

3. The church of Christ, whether particular (as publick assemblies,) hath blessed promises, Isaiah xxxiii. 20, 21, lix. 21; Matt. xviii. 20; 1 Cor. v. 4; Rev. ii. 1; Psalm xxvi. 8, cxxxiii. 3; Mic. iv. 4, 11, 12: or whether general or universal, it hath glorious promises, as Matt. xvi. 18; Isa. xxvii. 3; Psalm cxxv. 2; Zech. ix. 16. Here come in all the promises; first, of calling the Jews, as Isaiah lix. 20; Rom. xi. 23, 26; Hos. xiii. 4, xiv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Secondly, of bringing in the Gentiles, as Isaiah xl ix. 22, 23; Rev. xxi. 24; John x. 16; Isa. lx. 3, 5, 8; Acts x. 15; Eph. ii. 12, 19. Thirdly, of the destruction of antichrist, as 2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xvii. 16, xviii. 21, where each word hath almost a gradation, in that an angel, a mighty angel, taketh a stone, a great stone, even a milstone, which he letteth not barely fall, but casteth into the sea, whence nothing ordinarily is recovered, much

less a millstone, thrust from such a hand, and with such force.

Now for the exercising of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider, (1.) That we have had the performance of many of these promises; and this may persuade us that the residue (especially of the church's flourishing, and of antichrist's downfall,) is as sure as that part already accomplished. Experience should strengthen faith, and breed an assured hope in God's people of the Lord's most glorious appearing. (2.) That the time is now for the church's restoration, and for bringing in more kingdoms from antichrist to Christ. What else mean all the shakings in all the kingdoms of the world? Therefore study we this time of God, and in our places and callings work with Providence, now we have a season to help up the church, God's holy mountain.

2. For prayer, observe this method: (1.) Confess we our former neglect in our several relations; "O Lord, I have not done my duty in my own family, among Christians in the churches of Christ: I have not performed my vows, served my generation, helped onward the building of Zion. And now, Lord, what shall I say, but confess it to thy glory, and my own shame." (2.) Pray for blessings on others, as well as on our own selves; forget not our relations to others in our best prayers; be importunate with God more especially for Zion. "O look upon Zion the city of our solemnities; let thine eye see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; let not one of the stakes thereof be removed, nor any of the cords be broken." (3.) Press we the Lord with all his precious promises, either to our families, or Christian societies, or the churches of Christ. We have a promise, that "the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon the

assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence." Now, Lord, make good thy word. Conclude with, "I believe that whatsoever God hath said in any of these respects, he will fulfil it in his own time: heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot, one tittle of God's word shall fail. It may be for the present, things seem contrary, yet God hath said it, and that is enough for me. If I can but really acknowledge and believe that God is able to do it, he will then speak from heaven, as he did once on earth, According to your faith be it unto you."

OF

FAMILY DUTIES.

SECT. I.

Of the Nature of Family Duties.

HITHERTO of the duties which concern every man, in his own particular case; next to them succeed family duties, which ought to be jointly or respectively observed by the families and houses of the people of God. This is implied in that threat, “Pour out thy fury upon the families that call not upon thy name;” and in that example of Joshua, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord;” and that promise of God, “At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.”

SECT. II.

Of the Preparatives to Family Duties.

Now that we may comfortably carry on these family duties, we must observe, 1. Our entrance into them. 2. Our proceedings in them.

For entrance, we must lay a good foundation in those that belong to the family. First, in the governor, whose duty it is, 1. To endeavour in a special manner to attain

knowledge in God's Word, and holiness of conversation; which would tend much to the preservation of his authority, who otherwise would be slighted and disregarded. 2. To marry in the Lord, and then to live chastely in wedlock, that there may be an holy seed. 3. To beware whom he admits to dwell with him. See David's resolution herein, " Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way shall serve me; he that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." Secondly, in the governed, whose duty it is both to join together in the performance of family duties with their governor, and to submit to his government. " My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother, for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

SECT. III.

On the Duties of Governors in general.

In the proceeding of these family duties, we are to consider the duties, 1. Of the governors. 2. Of the governed.

1. The governors, if (as in marriage, there be more than one, as first, the chief governor, to wit, the husband, secondly, the helper, to wit, the wife: both these owe duties to their families, and duties to one another. The duties they owe to their families, are, 1. In general to the whole: 2. In particular, according to their several relations. That which in general they owe to the whole family, respects both their bodies and souls. (1.) Their bodies; concerning which, saith the apostle, " He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (2.) Their souls; concerning which some duties

they are to perform to the family, and some to require of the family.

1. The duties they must perform to them are: First, To provide that they may live under the publick ministry; for otherwise how should they be brought into the sheep-fold of Christ, if they hear not the voice of the chief Shepherd speaking unto them by those whom he hath sent. Secondly, To oversee the ways of their families, that they serve God; and, as in all other duties, so especially in sanctifying the sabbaths. To this the very words in the fourth commandment, bind all masters of families; "Remember,—thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid :" where the Lord speaks by name to the governors, as if he would make them overseers of this work of sanctifying of his sabbaths. Thirdly, To offer prayers and praises to the Lord morning and evening. This was David's practice, "Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice." Fourthly, To instruct their families privately in matters of religion, that they may not only profess, but feel the power of religion. This duty implies :

(1.) A familiar catechising of them in the principles of religion: thus were parents commanded of old, "Thou shalt teach these words diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (2.) A daily reading of Scriptures in their hearing, directing them to mark and to make use of them: so Timothy was trained up by his parents, and that from his childhood. (3.) A careful endeavouring that they may profit by the publick ministry. To this end they must prepare them to hear the word, by considering God's ordinances, promises, and their own necessities. 2. They must advise them to look into the word for Christ, and for communion with Christ. 3. They must examine them after the ordinances, what they have learned, and what use they can make of it.

2. The duties they are to require of the family are, both carefully to frequent the publick ministry, and diligently to attend to the private worship of God, and constantly to practise all holy and Christian duties ; and they are to require these things, not only by telling them, calling on them, catechising them, admonishing them ; but, if they be negligent, by correcting them. But this correction must be used in wisdom and patience. 1. In wisdom, whose property it is to find out the right party that committed the fault, to consider of what sort the fault was, to weigh circumstances of age, discretion, and occasions ; and to look to the mind of the doer, whether negligence or mere simplicity brought him to it. 2. In patience, whose property it is to make the fault manifest to the offender, that his conscience may be touched therewith ; to hear what the offender can say in his own defence, and accordingly to allow or disallow ; to avoid bitterness, which sooner will harden the heart than reform the manners of the offender. These rules being observed, and the heart lifted up in prayer to God for direction and blessing ; this correction, which is necessary, as is evident from Prov. xiii. 24, xix. 18, will not be in vain.

These are the duties that governors owe to their families in respect of their souls ; to correct them, catechize them, admonish them, call on them, read to them, pray for them.

SECT IV.

Of the Duties of Parents to their Children.

THE duties in particular which governors owe to the family, according to their relations, are as parents to their children, or as masters to their servants.

1. The duties of parents to the bodies of their children contain many particulars, but may be all comprised under this one head, *A provident care for their temporal good.*

The first age of a child is its infancy, and the first part

of its infancy is while it remains in the mother's womb. Here the duty lies principally upon the mother, to have a special care of it, that it may be safely brought forth. The next degree of a child's infancy is while it is in the swadling-band, and remains a sucking child: in this also the care more especially lies on the mother, whose duty it is to take all the pains she possibly can for the good of her child.

The second age of a child is its youth, from the time it begins to be of any discretion, till it be fit to be placed forth. Now the duty of parents at this time is, to nourish and nurture their children. Under nourishment are comprised food, apparel, means for recovery of health when they are sick; in which if parents provide not for their children, they are worse than infidels: and under nurture are comprised good manners, a good calling, frequent admonition, reprehension, correction, the last remedy, which may do good when nothing else can, Prov. xix. 18, xxiii. 13, 14, xxix. 17

2. The duty of parents to the souls of their children extends itself also to all times; as, 1. To their infancy; 2. To their youth; 3. To the time of the parent's departure out of this world. In their infancy their duty is, (1.) To pray for their children. Thus did Rebekah, while the children were quick in her womb. Those parents that neglect this duty to their children, consider not rightly that they are conceived in sin. (2.) To make sure (so much as in them lies,) that their children be born under the promise, or under the covenant, in respect of the spiritual part of it. How? By making sure that they be under the promise or covenant themselves. If God in Christ be their God, they may have a comfortable hope that God will be the God of their seed, according to the promise, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed." (3.) When their children are born; the duty of the parents is, to give up their children unto God, casting them into the hands of his Providence, into the arms of his mercy, begging for them a gracious acceptance with God; and to tender

them to the ordinance, or sacrament of baptism, to get the seal of the covenant set upon them.

2. The second age of a child, is its youth. Now the duty of parents to their children at this time, is to train them up in true piety, "To bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." To this end: 1. When children begin to read, let them read the Holy Scriptures: so was Timothy trained up from a child. 2. Let children be catechized constantly from day to day: only with this caveat, that parents deal with their children as skilful nurses and mothers do in feeding their children, i. e. not to give them too much at once; overmuch dulls a child's understanding, and breeds wearisomeness to it. It is most suitable to give them "precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little." Thus shall they learn with ease and delight, and in time a great measure of knowledge will be gained thereby. 3. Let parents declare to their children, the admirable works that God in former times hath done for his church, especially such works as he hath done in their time. Outward sensible things do best work upon children, and therefore this direction was given under the law, Josh. iv. 6, 21. 4. Let parents be to their children good patterns, leading them to Christ by their examples: this will take effect with children more than all precepts. 5. Let parents reprove and correct their children for sin; and that the Lord may sanctify this correction unto them, "Consider this, O ye parents!" Do you observe such and such sins in your children? Enter into your own hearts, examine yourselves, whether they come not from you: consider how justly the hand of God may be upon you; and when you are angry with your children, have an holy anger against your own selves, and use this or the like meditation with your own souls, "Lord, shall I thus punish my own sin in my child? How then mayest thou be displeased with me for the too carnal conception of my child. It may be I then lay in some sin, or I asked not the child of thee by

prayer. Be merciful to me, O Lord, and in thy good time shew thou pity on me and my child !” 6. As children grow in years, and in the knowledge of Christ, and of justification by Christ, let parents train them up in the exercise of all duties ; as prayer, meditation, self-examination, watchfulness, and all means publick and private. If this be done, the world to come may reap the benefit of their education. Such children as you bring up, such parents will they be, (when you are gone,) to their children.

3. The last time to which the duty of parents extends itself is the time of their departure out of the world, and then they owe to their children good direction and faithful prayer. 1. For direction : when parents observe their time to draw near, it is their duty then especially to commend some wise and wholesome precepts to their children, the better to direct them in their Christian course. The words of a dying parent are especially regarded, and make a deeper impression. 2. For prayer : then is the most proper time for parents to pray and to bless all their children. As they commend their own souls unto God’s hands, so let them commend their children unto God’s grace. God’s providence and promises are the best inheritance in the world, and if parents (in their prayers,) leave these to their children, they can never want any thing that is good. O ! the faithful prayers of parents for their children (especially when they are leaving their children and going to God,) must needs, in, for, and through Christ, prevail mightily with God.

SECT. V

Of the Duties of Masters to Servants.

THE duty of masters to their servants is either to their bodies, or to their souls.

1. The duty of masters to the bodies of their servants consists in these particulars, viz. in a due provision of

food, Prov. xxxi. 15, xxvii. 27. In a wise care for their clothing, Prov. xxxi. 21. In a well-ordering of their labour, so as they may be able to undergo it; their ease, rest, and intermission from labour at seasonable times. In paying them sufficient wages, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. In a careful preserving of their health, and using means for their recovery in case of sickness, Matt. viii. 6, and that not of the servant's wages, but of the master's own charge, otherwise they undo not the heavy burden, but rather lay burden upon burden.

2. The duty of masters to the souls of their servants consists in these particulars, viz. in teaching them the principles of religion, and all duties of piety; in causing them to attend the publick ministry of the word and worship of God; in taking account of their profiting by the publick and private means of edification; in praying for them, and as they observe any grace wrought in them, in praising God for it, and praying for the increase of it.

SECT. VI.

Of the Duties of the Husband and Wife.

THE duties which the chief governor and his helper owe to one another, are either common and mutual, or peculiar to each.

1. The common mutual duties betwixt man and wife, are matrimonial unity, and matrimonial chastity; loving affection of one another, and provident care of one for the other.

The former duties being pre-supposed, there ought to be:—

First, A loving and affectionate pouring out of their hearts, with much dearness into each other's bosom. This mutual melting-heartedness, being preserved fresh and fruitful, will infinitely sweeten and beautify the marriage state. Now for the preservation of this love, let

them consider, 1. The compassionate and melting appellations which Christ and his spouse exchange in the Canticles : " My fair one, my love, my dove, my undefiled, my well-beloved, the chief of ten thousand." Such a fervent and chaste love as this all married couples should imitate. 2. The command of God, " Husbands, love your wives," Eph. v. 25 ; and " Wives, love your husbands," Tit. ii. 4. Methinks this charge, oft considered, should ever beat back all heart-rising and bitterness, all wicked wishes that they had never met together. When the knot is tied, every man should think his wife the fittest for him, and every wife should think her husband the fittest for her of any other in the world.

Secondly, a *provident* care of one for the other ; which should extend to the body : " No man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it :" but especially to the soul ; in praying for and with each other : in taking notice of the beginning and least measure of grace, and approving the same ; in conferring about such things as concern the same, mutually propounding questions, and giving answers to one another ; in maintaining holy and religious exercises in the family, and betwixt their own selves ; in stirring up one another to hear the word, to receive the Lord's supper, and to attend all the parts of God's publick worship. In case the one prove unconverted, let the other wait, and pray, and expect God's good time. Or, in case the one be a babe in Christ, let the other deal lovingly, meekly, and let our Lord Jesus in his tender-heartedness to spiritual youths, teach us mercy this way, who is said to " gather the lambs with his arms, and to carry them in his bosom, and gently to lead those that are with young."

2. The peculiar duties of each are :—

1. Of the husband, whose duty it is, 1. That he dearly love his wife. 2. That he wisely maintain and manage his authority over her.

No question the wife is to love her husband, and a brother to love his brother, and a friend to love his

friend; but more especially is the husband to love his wife. To this purpose she is called, The wife of his bosom, to shew that she ought to be as his heart in his bosom. He must love her at all times, he must love her in all things. Love must season and sweeten his speech, carriage, actions towards her. Love must shew itself in his commands, reproofs, admonitions, instructions, authority, familiarity with her; the origin of which love must not be from her beauty or nobility, but especially because she is his sister in the Christian religion, and an inheritor with him in the kingdom of heaven; because she bears him children, the heirs of his name and substance; and because of the union and conjunction of marriage. Love growing on beauty, riches, lust, or any other slight grounds, soon vanisheth; but if grounded on these considerations, and especially on this union of marriage, it is lasting and true. The want hereof is the fountain of strife, quarrelling, and debate, which converts the paradise of marriage into an hell.

For the manner of this love, the apostle gives it thus, “Husbands, love your own wives, even as Christ also loved the church.” Now the love of Christ to his church is commended to us in these particulars:—1. His love was every way free. So should husbands love their wives, though there be nothing in their wives to move them, but merely because they are their wives. 2. Christ began it to the church before the church could love him: so should husbands begin to love their own wives. I know some wives prevent their husbands herein, but the greater is their glory. This pattern of Christ should rather stir up their husbands to go before them. 3. The truth of Christ’s love was manifested by the fruits thereof to his church; “He gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle:” so must husbands love their wives in truth, by guiding them in the way of life, for this is the true character of a sincere love. 4. Christ’s love is an holy, pure, and chaste love; as he

himself is, so is his love; such must be the love of husbands, an holy, pure, and chaste love. Away with all intemperate, excessive, or any ways exorbitant pollutions of the marriage bed; from which, if the fear of God, imitation of Christ, love of purity, awfulness of God's all-seeing eye cannot draw; yet that horror lest God should punish such a couple with no children, or mis-shapen children, or with idiots, or wicked children, or with some other heavy cross, one would think, should be able to affright them. 5. Christ "having loved his own, loved them unto the end." Such must be the love of husbands, firm love, an inviolable love. The ground of it must be God's ordinance, and the support of it must be an inviolable resolution that no provocation shall ever change it. Husbands must pass by all infirmities, endeavouring in love to redress them, if possibly they can, or if not, to bear with them.

The second duty of an husband is, wisely to maintain and manage his authority. Now, the managing of it consists in two things: 1. That he tenderly respect her. 2. That he carefully provide for her. 1. He must tenderly respect her, as his wife, companion, yoke-fellow; as his delight, and the desire of his eyes, and never be bitter against her. Bitterness ordinarily turneth the edge of the husband's authority. If therefore any matter of unkindness arise, (as sometimes certainly it will,) then must he carefully, with all gentleness and patience, quiet all, and never suffer himself nor his wife to sleep in displeasure. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Or, if he shall have occasion to reprove her, he must keep his words until a convenient time, (not do it in presence of others,) and then in the spirit of meekness and love. Surely, if she be not corrected by a word of wisdom, she will never amend by threats or rigorous carriage. And if she once begin to lose her shamefacedness in the presence of her husband, it is likely there will be often quarrels betwixt them, and the house will be full of disquietness. It is best therefore to deal wisely with her, to admonish her

often, to reprehend her seldom, never to lay violent hands on her; if she be dutiful, to cherish her, that she may so continue; if wayward, mildly to suffer her, that she may not wax worse.

2. He must carefully provide for her: To this purpose he is called her head, as Christ is head of the church. The head, you know, is the fountain of motion, quickening, life to the body; so should the husband be as the well-spring of liveliness, lightsomeness, light-heartedness to his wife: she hath forsook all for him, and therefore she should receive from him a continual influence to cheerful walking, and comfortably enjoying herself.

2. The duties proper to the wife are these:—1. That she be in submission to her husband. 2. That she be an helper to him all her days.

1. Wives must be in subjection to their own husbands. Sarah obeyed Abraham, and called him Lord. But here is a case of conscience. 1. What if her husband be a son of Belial, and an enemy to Christ, must she then yield subjection? Yes: because in his office as her husband he is as in Christ's stead. The church is compared to "a lily among thorns;" she remains lily-like, white, soft, pleasant, and amiable, though she be joined with thorns, which are prickly and sharp. So a wife must be meek, mild, gentle, obedient, though she be matched with a crooked, perverse, and wicked husband. She must in this case remove her eyes from the disposition of her husband's person to the condition of his place, and by virtue thereof (seeing he beareth Christ's image,) be subject unto him as unto Christ. 2. What if her husband command things contrary to Christ, must she therein be subject? No: "Submit as unto the Lord." If she submits to things contrary to Christ, she submits not "as to the Lord." Conscientious wives must remember they have an husband in heaven, as well as on earth, betwixt whom there is a greater difference than betwixt heaven and earth. And therefore, in case they order contrary

things, they must prefer God before man, Christ before all men.

2. Wives must be helpers to their husbands. Now this helpfulness consists in these things : 1. That she be careful to preserve his person, in sickness or health, in adversity or prosperity, in youth or old age. 2. That she learn and labour to fore-cast, contrive, and manage her household affairs ; for which see a glorious pattern in Prov. xxxi. 3. That she may help her husband, in erecting and establishing Christ's glorious kingdom in their house, and especially in their own hearts. This is that *one necessary thing*, without which their family is but satan's seminary, and a nursery for hell. This will marvellously sweeten all reproaches cast upon them by envenomed tongues. This will sweetly seal unto them their assurance of meeting together in heaven.

Thus much of the duties of governors ; we now come to the governed.

SECT. VII.

Of Duties of Children to Parents.

1. THE inward duties which children owe to their parents, are love and fear. Love, like sugar, sweetens fear ; and fear, like salt, seasons love. There must be a loving fear, and a fearing love. Hence the fear of a child is opposed to the fear of a slave ; for a child's fear being mixed with love, hath respect to the offence which a parent may take ; but a slave's fear, which is ordinarily mixed with hatred, hath respect to nothing but the punishment which his master may inflict upon him. This love-like fear is so proper to children, that the awful respect which the saints bear to God is called a filial fear. Children have received their substance from the very substance of their parents, and therefore they are to perform this duty of love and fear to them.

2. The outward duties, or the manifestation of the love and fear in children, must appear, 1. In their reverence in speech and carriage. They must give to their parents reverent and holy titles, meek and humble speeches, obeisance as becomes their age and sex. Thus Joseph and Solomon bowed, the one to his father, and the other to his mother. Contrary hereto is mocking and despising father and mother; of which, said Solomon, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out;" a phrase that sets forth the end of a notorious malefactor that is hanged in the air till the ravens pick out his eyes. 2. In their obedience to the commands, instructions, reproofs and corrections of their parents, Eph. vi. 1, Prov. i. 8, 9. The reason is, because of God, whom the Father represents. Children must remember, that whatsoever they do to their parents they do it to God; when they disobey them, they disobey God; when they please them, they please God; when their parents are justly angry with them, God is angry with them; nor can they recover God's favour (though all the saints of heaven should entreat for them,) till they have submitted themselves to their parents; only with this limitation, that they submit or obey them "in the Lord," Eph. vi. 1. 3. In their recompence. This is a duty whereby children endeavour (as much as in them lies,) to repay what they can for their parents' kindness, care, and cost towards them, in the way of thankfulness. In sickness, they must visit them; in want they must provide for them; in time of danger, they must endeavour to effect their protection.

SECT. VIII.

Of the Duties of Servants to their Masters.

Duties of servants to their masters, are either inward, as fear; or outward, as reverence and obedience.

1. The inward duty is fear: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, and account them worthy of all honour." So proper is this fear to a servant, that where it is wanting, there is a plain denial of his master's place and power. "If I be a master, where is my fear?" said God. I mean not slavish fear, as when a servant fears nothing but the revenging power of his master; but an awful fear of provoking his master, so that it makes him consider every way how he may please him: and such a fear draws him on cheerfully to perform his duty.

2. Outward duties, which issue from this fear, are reverence and obedience. 1. Reverence, which is manifested in speech and carriage. Thus servants must give reverent titles to their masters, as father, lord, and master, &c. They must yield obeisance to them; "as the children of the prophets, when they saw that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him." 2. Obedience, which hath respect to the commands, instructions, reproofs, and corrections of their masters, 1 Pet. ii. 18, 20. But here a case or two of conscience ariseth.

1. How far they must obey; or what is the extent of servants' obedience to masters?—The apostle answers, "Servants, obey, in all things, your masters according to the flesh." It is not sufficient that servants perform well their duties in some things; they must do it in all things; yea, in things that may be against their own liking, if their masters will have it so. Like as Peter, when Christ bid him launch out into the deep, and let down his net for a draught, "he answered, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word, I will let down the net." So must servants say, when they have a peremptory command, though contrary to their own judgments, "This or that in all humility I suppose, 'Nevertheless, at your word, I will let down the net; I will do as you please.'"

2. But what if God and a master should command contrary things? In such a case, the apostle sets down

an excellent limitation in these four phrases ; 1. As unto Christ. 2. As the servants of Christ. 3. Doing the will of God. 4. As to the Lord. All these imply, That if masters command their servants any thing contrary to Christ, they may not yield to it. Upon this ground the midwives of the Hebrew women would not kill the Hebrew children ; “They feared God,” (saith the text,) “ and did not as the king commanded them.” In this case, Joseph is commended in not hearkening to his mistress ; and the servants of Saul are commended in refusing to slay the Lord’s priests at their master’s command. When masters command or forbid any thing against God and Christ, they go beyond their commission, and their authority ceaseth ; so that servants may say, “We ought to obey God rather than man.”

I have now run through the family, and informed you of the duties both of governors and the governed. Christians, look within you, look about you ; “That man is not a good man that is not good in all his relations.” The same God that requires us to serve him as private persons, requires us to serve him in our relations. And therefore, though you be never so careful of your duty in the former respect, yet you may go to hell for neglecting your duties as masters, servants, husbands, wives, parents, or children. Though if you should be good in one relation, yet if you endeavour not to be good in every relation, you shall never go to heaven. For the same God that commands you to serve him as a master, commands you to serve him as a father, as an husband. “And he that keeps the whole law, and offends in one point, is guilty of all.”

LOOKING UNTO JESUS:

OR, THE

SOUL'S EYING OF JESUS.

AS CARRYING ON

THE GREAT WORK OF MAN'S SALVATION.

TO

THE READER.

AMONGST all the duties I formerly mentioned, I omitted one that I look upon as chief and choice of all the rest. This is the duty I call *Looking unto Jesus*; and if I must discover the occasion of my falling on it, I shall do it truly and plainly. In the spring of 1653, I was visited with a sore sickness; and as the Lord began to restore my health, it came into my thoughts what Jesus had done for my soul, and what he was doing, and what he would do for it, till he saved it to the uttermost. In my conceptions of these things, I could find no beginning of his actings, but in that eternity before the world was made; nor could I find any end of his actings, but in that eternity after the world should be unmade; only betwixt these two extremities, I apprehended various transactions of Jesus Christ, both past, and present, and to come. In the multitude of these thoughts within me, my soul exceedingly delighted itself, and that delight stirring up in

me other affections, I began to consider those texts in Scripture which seemed to impose the working of my affections on so blessed an object as a gospel duty. Then I resolved, if the Lord Jesus would but restore my health, and prolong my life, I would endeavour to discover more of this gospel duty than ever yet I knew. And that my pains herein might not hinder my other necessary labours, my purpose was to fall on this subject in my ordinary preaching, wherein I might have occasion both to search into Scripture, several authors, and my own heart.

In process of time I began this work, begging of God that he would help me to finish, as he inclined me to begin, and that all might tend to his glory, and the church's good. In the progress of my labours, I found a world of spiritual comfort, both in respect to the object that I handled, Jesus Christ, and in respect of the act wherein consisted my duty to him, in "looking unto Jesus."

1. For the object, it was the very subject whereon more especially I was bound to preach, "Christ in you the hope of glory," (said Paul to his Colossians;) and he immediately adds, "Whom we preach," Col. i. 27, 28; and "unto me, who am less than the least of all the saints, is this grace given." What grace? "That I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ," Eph. iii. 8. Ministers ought in duty more abundantly to preach Jesus Christ. And I may feelingly say, it is the sweetest subject that ever was preached on. Is it not "as an ointment poured forth," whose smell is so fragrant, and whose savour is so sweet, that "therefore all the virgins love him?" Is it not comprehensive of all glory, beauty and excellency, whether of things in heaven or things on earth? Is it not a mystery sweet and deep?

Surely volumes are written of Jesus Christ ; there is line upon line, sermon upon sermon, book upon book ; and yet, such is the mystery, that we are all but as yet at the first side of the catechism of Jesus Christ. Solomon was but at “What is his name ?” And I fear many of us know neither name nor thing. It is a worthy study to make further and further discoveries of this blessed mystery ; and it were to be wished, that all the ministers of Christ would spend themselves in the spelling, and reading, and understanding of it. As some great point doth deserve the abilities of many scholars, (and all little enough when joined together,) to make a discovery thereof ; such is this high point, this holy, glorious mystery, worthy of the pains of all the learned ; and if they would all bring their notes together, and add all their studies together, they should find still but a little of this mystery known, in comparison of what remains unknown.

2. For the act of looking unto Jesus, as it is comprehensive of knowing, hoping, believing, loving, so also of joying. How then should I but be filled with joy unspeakable and glorious, whilst I was studying, writing, and especially acting my soul in the exercise of this looking. If there be any duty on earth resembling the duties of the saints in heaven, I dare say, it is this. Mr. Rutherford writeth thus, “An act of living in Christ, and on Christ, in the acts of seeing, enjoying, embracing, loving, resting on him, is that noon-day divinity, and theology of beatiful vision. There is a general assembly of immediately illuminated Divines about the throne, who study, lecture, preach, praise Christ night and day.—Oh ! what rays, what dartings of intellectual fruition, beholding, enjoying, and living in him, come from that face, that God-visage of the Lord God Almighty, and of the Lamb that is in the

midst of them. And, oh! what reflections, and reachings forth of intellectual vision, embracing, loving, wondering, are returning back to him in a circle of glory. Now if this be the saints' duty, who are perfect in glory; do we not imitate them, and feel something of heaven in our imitation, in our looking also unto Jesus? I write what in some measure I have felt; and of which I hope to feel yet more; and therefore whoever thou art that readest, I beseech thee, come, warm thy heart at this blessed fire! Oh! come, and smell the precious ointments of Jesus Christ! Oh! come, and sit down under his shadow with great delight! Oh! that all men, (especially those into whose hands this book shall come,) would presently fall upon the practice of this gospel art of looking unto Jesus! If herein they find nothing of heaven, my skill will fail me; only let them pray, that as they look to him, so virtue may proceed out of him, and fill their souls.

Reader, one thing more I have to say to thee. If thou wouldest know how to carry on this duty constantly, as thou dost thy morning and thy evening prayer, it were not amiss if every day, either morning or evening, thou wouldest take some part of it at one time, and some part of it at another time, at least for some space of time together. I know some, that in a constant daily course carry on in secret those two necessary duties of meditation and prayer. What the subject matter of this meditation is, I am not very certain; only our experience can tell us, that be it heaven or be it hell; be it sin or be it grace, or be it what it may; if we are in exercise of the self-same subject either constantly, or frequently, we are apt to grow remiss, or cold, or formal; and the reason is, one thing tires quickly, unless that one be all. Now that is Christ, for he is all, Col. iii. 11. If then but once a day

thou wouldst make this Jesus Christ thy subject to know, consider, desire, believe, joy in, call upon, and conform unto, in his several respects of performing thy redemption, in his birth, life, death, resurrection, assension; session, intercession, and coming again; and that one of these particulars might be thy one day's exercise, and so every day thou wouldst proceed from first to last, in thus looking unto Jesus, I suppose thou wouldst never tire thyself. And why so? There is variety in this matter to be looked unto, and there is variety in the manner of looking on it. For instance: one day thou mightest consider thy knowing of Jesus: the next day thou mightest meditate on Jesus in that respect; and the next day thou mightest desire after Jesus in that respect; and the next day thou mightest hope in Jesus in that respect; and so on, till thou comest to the last day of the work. Now would not this variety delight? It is the observation of Mr. Lockyer, on Col. i. 16, that a holy soul cannot tire itself in the contemplation of Jesus. How much less can it tire itself in looking unto Jesus, which is far more comprehensive than contemplating Jesus? Come, try this duty, and be constant in it at least one year, and so every year during thy life; and then for thy meditations on any other subject I shall not take thee quite off, but leave the remainder of the year to thy own choice. If thou art so resolved, I shall say no more, but the Lord be with thee; and if sooner or later thou findest any benefit by this work, give God the glory, and remember him, in thy prayers, who hath taken this pains for Christ's honour, and thy soul's good.—So rests

Thy servant in Christ Jesus,

I. A

LOOKING UNTO JESUS:

OR,

THE SOUL'S EYING JESUS

AS CARRYING ON THE GREAT WOKK OF MAN'S SALVATION.

THE FIRST BOOK.

HEB. XII. 2.

Looking unto Jesus, the beginner and finisher of our faith.

CHAP. I.

The Division and Opening of the Words.

THE most excellent subject to discourse, or write of, is Jesus Christ. Augustin having read Cicero's works, commended them for their eloquence, but he passed this sentence upon them, "They are not sweet, because the name of Jesus is not in them." Indeed all we say is unsavoury, if it be not seasoned with this salt. "I determined not to know any thing among you, (saith Paul,) save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." He resolved

with himself, before he preached among the Corinthians, that this should be the only point of knowledge that he would profess himself to have skill in, and which, in the course of his ministry, he would labour to bring them to. This he made the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of his knowledge. "Yea, doubtless, (saith he,) and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." In this knowledge of Christ there is an excellency above all other knowledge in the world. There is nothing more pleasing and comfortable, more animating and enlivening. Christ is the sum and centre of all Divine and revealed truths. We can preach nothing else as the object of our faith, which doth not some way or other either meet in Christ, or refer to Christ. Only Christ is the whole of man's happiness; the sun to enlighten him, the physician to heal him, the wall of fire to defend him, the friend to comfort him, the pearl to enrich him, the ark to support him, the rock to sustain him under the heaviest pressures; "As an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Only Christ is that ladder betwixt earth and heaven; the Mediator betwixt God and man; a mystery which the angels of heaven desire to pry into. Here is a blessed subject indeed: Who would not be glad to be acquainted with it? "This is life eternal, to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Come, then! let us look on this Sun of Righteousness; we cannot receive harm, but good by such a look. Indeed, by looking long on the natural sun we may have our eyes dazzled, and our faces blackened; but by looking unto Jesus, we shall have our eyes made clearer, and our faces fairer. If "the light of the eye rejoice the heart," how much more when we have such a blessed object to look upon! As Christ is more excellent than all the world, so this sight transcends all other sights. Looking unto Jesus is the epitome of a Christian's happiness, the quintessence of evangelical duties.

In the text we have the act and object. The act in the original is very emphatical *Αφορωντες εις*; the English doth not fully express it; it signifies a drawing of the eye from one object to another; there are two expressions, 'Απο and εις; the one signifies a turning of the eye from all other objects; the other a fast fixing of the eye upon such an object, and only upon such. So is it but a looking off, and a looking on. On what? That is the object, a looking unto Jesus; a title that denotes his mercy, as Christ denotes his office. My meaning is not to insist on this name in contradiction to any other names of Christ. He is often called Christ, and Lord, and Mediator, and Son of God, and Emmanuel: but Jesus is all these. Jesus is Christ, as he is the anointed of God; and Jesus is Lord, as he hath dominion over all the world; and Jesus is Mediator, as he is the reconciler of God and man; and Jesus is the Son of God, as he was eternally begotten before all worlds; and Jesus is Emmanuel, as he was incarnate, and so God with us. Only because Jesus signifies Saviour, and this name was given him upon that very account, "For he shall save his people from their sins;" I shall make this my design to look at Jesus more especially, as carrying on the great work of our salvation from first to last. This indeed is the glad tidings, the gospel, the gospel privilege, and our gospel duty, looking unto Jesus.

CHAP. II.

The Duty of looking off all other Things confirmed and cleared.

BUT first we must look off all other things. We must take off our minds from every thing which might divert us in our Christian race from looking unto Jesus. But what things are they which we must look off in this respect? I answer,—1. Good things. 2. Evil things.

1. Good things. The apostle tells us of a cloud of

witnesses in the former verse, which no question in their season we are to look unto. But when this second object comes in sight, he scatters the cloud quite, and sets up Jesus himself. Now the apostle willeth us to turn our eyes from them, and to turn hither to Jesus Christ ; as if he had said, If you will indeed see a sight once for all, look to him. The saints, though they be guides to us, yet are they but followers to him ; he is the leader of them, and of us all ; look on him. There is a time, when James may say, "Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example ;" but when Jesus comes forth, that said, "I have given you an example ;" an example above all examples, then "be silent all flesh before the Lord." Let all saints and seraphim then cover their faces with their wings, that we may look on Jesus, and let all other sights go.

2. Evil things. We must look off all that is in the world ; and that the apostle comprizeth under these three heads, "the lusts of the eyes, the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life ;" or, pleasures, profits, and honours. 1. We must look off this world in respect of its sinful pleasures. Jude tells us, "Such as are sensual have not the Spirit." We cannot fixedly look on pleasures, and look on Jesus at once. 2. We must look off this world in respect of its sinful profits. A look on this keeps off our looking unto Jesus. "Whosoever loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Just so much as the world prevails in us, so much is God's love abated both in us and towards us. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, (saith St. James,) know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ?" When we have enough in God and Christ, and yet desire to make up our happiness in the creature, this is plain spiritual whoredom. 3. We must look off the world in respect of its honours. What is this desire to be well thought of, or well spoken of ? As if a man should run up and down after a feather flying in the air. It is a question whether ever he get it ; but if he do, it is but a feather ; such is honour ; it is hard to

obtain it, but if obtained, it is but the breath of a few men's mouths ; but what is worst of all, it hinders our sight of Christ. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." Worldly honour keeps many back from Christ.

But why must we look off every thing that diverts our looking unto Jesus ? 1. Because we cannot look fixedly on Christ and such things at once. The eye cannot look upwards and downwards at once ; we cannot seriously mind heaven and earth in one thought. "No man can serve two masters ;" especially such as jar, and have contrary employments, as Christ and mammon have. 2. Because whilst we look on these things, we cannot see the beauty that is in Christ. Our wishing-looks on other things, makes Christ but mean and contemptible in our eyes. 3. Because all other things in comparison of Christ are not worth a look ; they are but poor, low, mean, base things, in comparison of Christ. "I count all things but loss, (saith St. Paul,) for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.—I count them but dung that I may win Christ." Some translate *Σκυβαλα*, *chaff*, others *dog's-meat*, others *excrements, dung* ; all agree, it is such a thing as men usually cast away from them with abhorrence. 4. Because it is according to the very law of marriage : "Therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife." The Lord Christ marries himself to the souls of his saints ; and for this cause the soul must forsake all, and cleave unto Christ. 5. Because Christ is a jealous God. Now jealousy is a passion in the soul, that will not endure any sharing in the object beloved. And so Christ cannot endure that we should look on any other things, so as to lust after them. 6. Because all other things can never satisfy the eye. "All things are full of labour, (saith Solomon,) man cannot utter it ; the eye is not satisfied with seeing :" it is but wearied with looking on divers objects, and yet still desires new ones : but once admit it to that glorious sight of Christ, and then it rests fully satisfied.

CHAP. III.

SECT. I. *An Explanation of the Act and Object of looking.*

An experimental looking unto Jesus, is that my text aims at. It is not a swimming knowledge of Christ, but an hearty feeling of Christ's inward workings ; it is not notions of Christ, but hearty motions towards Christ, that are implied in this inward looking.

2. For the object, you must look on Jesus. It is the most blessed object that the eye of the mind can possibly fix upon. Of all objects under heaven, Jesus hath the pre-eminence in perfection, and he should have the pre-eminence in our meditation. It is he that makes us most happy when we possess him, and we cannot but be joyful to look upon him, especially when looking is a degree of possessing.—Jesus signifies Saviour ; it is an Hebrew name ; the Greeks borrowed it from the Hebrews, the Latins from the Greeks, and all other languages from the Latins. It comes from the Hebrew word *Jehoshua*, or *Joshua*, which in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, (written after the Babylonian captivity,) is *Jeshua* ; and so is our Saviour's name always written in the Syriack translation of the New Testament. This name Jesus was given to Christ the Son of God by his Father, and brought from heaven by an angel, first to Mary, and then to Joseph ; and on the day when he was circumcised, (as the manner was,) this name was given him by his parents, as it was commanded from the Lord, by the angel Gabriel. It includes both his office and his natures. He is the alone Saviour of man, “ For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” And he is a perfect and an absolute Saviour ; “ He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” I will not deny, but that the work of salvation is common to all the three Persons in the Trinity.

It is a known rule, “ All outward actions are equally common to the three Persons ;” for as they are all one in nature and will, so must they be also one in operation ; the Father saveth, the Son saveth, and the Holy Ghost saveth ; yet we must distinguish them in the manner of saving : the Father saveth by the Son, the Son saveth by paying the ransom and price of our salvation ; the Holy Ghost saveth by a particular applying of that ransom unto men. Now whereas the Son pays the price of our redemption, and not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, therefore in this special respect he is called our Saviour, our Jesus.

Herein is set forth the offices of Christ, the two natures of Christ, the qualities of Christ, the excellencies of Christ. Oh ! what variety of sweet matter is in Jesus. He hath in him “ all the powders of the merchants.” An holy soul cannot tire itself in viewing Jesus. We know one thing tires quickly, unless that one be all : Christ is so, and none else : “ He is all, and in all ;” all belonging to being ; and all belonging to well-being. In things below Jesus, some have this excellency, and some have that, but none have all. Oh ! what variety is in Jesus. Variety of time, “ He is Alpha and Omega ;” variety of beauty, “ He is white and ruddy ;” variety of quality, he is a lion and a lamb, a servant and a son ; variety of excellency, he is man and God. Oh ! where shall we begin in this view of Jesus ? “ Who shall declare his generation ?” All the evangelists exhibit unto us the Saviour, but every one of them in his particular method. Mark describes not all the genealogy of Jesus, but begins his history at his baptism. Matthew searcheth out his original from Abraham. Luke follows it backwards as far as Adam. John passeth further upwards, even to the eternal generation of this “ Word that was made flesh.” So they lead us to Jesus, mounting up four several steps ; in the one we see him only among the men of his own time ; in the second he is seen in the tent of Abraham ; in the third he is yet higher, to wit, in Adam ; and finally,

having traversed all ages, through so many generations, we come to contemplate him in the beginning, in the bosom of the Father, in that eternity in which he was with God before all worlds. And there let us begin, still looking unto Jesus, as he carries on the great work of our salvation from first to last, from everlasting to everlasting.

SECT. II. *The main Doctrine, and Confirmation of it.*

But for the foundation of our building take this note.— “Inward experimental looking unto Jesus, such as stirs up affections in the heart, and the effects thereof in our life, is an ordinance of Christ, a choice, an high gospel-ordinance.” Or thus: “Inward experimental knowing, considering, desiring, hoping, believing, loving, joying, calling on Jesus, and conforming to Jesus, is the most precious ordinance of Jesus Christ.”

Looking unto Jesus is that great ordinance appointed by God for our most especial good. How many souls have blessed themselves in the use of other means, and though in them Christ hath communicated some virtue to them, yet because they did not trade more with them, they had little in comparison? Such a one as deals immediately with Christ, will do more in a day than another in a year, and therefore I call it a choice, a complete, an high gospel-ordinance. Jesus is the object; and Jesus, as Jesus, as he is our Saviour, as he hath negotiated, or shall yet negotiate the great business of our salvation. *Looking unto* is the act; but such as includes all these acts, knowing, considering, desiring, hoping, believing, loving, joying, enjoying of Jesus, and conforming to Jesus. It is such a look as stirs up affections in the heart, and the effects thereof in our life. It is such a look as leaves a quickening upon the spirit. It is such a look as works us into a warm affection, raised resolution, an holy and upright conversation. Briefly, it is an inward, experimental looking unto Jesus.

This was the Lord's charge to the Gentiles of old ; "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. And I said, behold me ! behold me ! unto a nation that was not called by my name." And according to this command was their practice ; "Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord," saith David. "They looked unto him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed." And according to this command is the practice of gospel believers ; "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Instead of the vail of Mosaical figures, God hath now given to his church the clear glass of the gospel ; and hence all believers under the gospel do, by contemplative faith, behold Christ, together with the glorious light of his mercy, truth, and the rest of his Divine attributes ; and by means thereof they are made like unto him in the glory of holiness, and in newness of life.

Sect. III. *Use of Reproof.*

Well, then ! is inward experimental looking unto Jesus a choice, an high gospel-ordinance ? How may this reprove thousands. How many are there that mind not this duty. The truth is, that as "the whole world lies in wickedness," so the eyes of the whole world are misplaced. There are few that have a care of this choice, of this high gospel-ordinance. I shall therefore reprove both the ungodly and godly.

1. For the ungodly, not Christ, nor God, is in all their thoughts. Alas ! they cannot tell what it means, to look unto Jesus. Nor speak I only of poor Indians, and other savages, who come into the world, not knowing wherefore, and go out of the world, not knowing whither ; but of such as live within the Christian church, that have nothing to distinguish them from those Indian miscreants but outward formalities, the charity of others, and their own

slight imaginations. Why, alas ! these are they that the Lord complains of, that "They have eyes and see not. My people have forgotten me days without number." You will say, Is there any such here ? Can I tax any of you, that you do not look up to Jesus ? Are not your eyes towards Christ in your prayers, praises, publick and private duties ? Nay, are not you now in the duty whilst I am speaking, and you hearing ? I answer, however you may deem that you do this or that, yet God reckons it as a thing not done in these respects.—1. When it is not done to purpose : as when our looking to Christ makes us not like Christ ; if there be no effectual impression upon the heart, Christ takes it as if we had never looked towards him at all. 2. When it is done unwillingly. Let no man deceive himself ; though he cast his eyes towards heaven all the day long, if he love not his work, he doth nothing ; he looks not at Jesus. 3. When a man makes it not his course to look unto Jesus. A man may come unto a carpenter's house, and take up his tools, and do something at his work, but this makes him not a carpenter, because it is not his trade. So ungodly men may look and think of Christ, but because this is not their course and trade, they make it not their work to look to Christ ; they are therefore said, not to look to him.

Consider, you who plead that you are Christians, and that you mind Christ at this very instant, that you are in the duty, even whilst I am speaking of it, and yet you neither do it to purpose, nor willingly ; is it not with you as it is with them of whom Christ spake, " Many will say to me, at that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name ? And in thy name have cast out devils ? And in thy name have done many wonderful works ?" They will plead at the last day as you plead now ; but for all that, you know the answer, " I never knew you ; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

2. For the godly, are they not careless of this duty ? I know not whether through want of skill, or through want of will ; but sure I am, this duty lies neglected by most of

the people of God. Their faults I may express in these respects :—

1. In not pointing their minds towards Jesus. “ I write unto you,” (saith the apostle,) “ to stir up your minds, by way of remembrance;” it is in the original *εγείρειν*, “ to awaken your pure minds;” and it was but need. *Awaking* is a word that imports *rousing*, as birds that provoke their young ones by flight to make use of their wings. Now, how few are there who thus call upon themselves. It was the prophet’s complaint, “ No man stirs up himself to take hold on God.” Oh! what a shame is this. Is it fit that our understandings, which God hath intrusted us with, should be no more improved? Is it fit that our minds, (those golden cabinets which God hath given us, to be filled with heavenly treasure,) should either be empty, or stuffed with vanity, nothing, worse than nothing? Oh! that such glorious things as our immortal spirits should run after vanity; which, if rightly improved, should walk with angels, should lodge themselves in the bosom of the glorious God! Do we not see how Christ is sending out to us continually? The thoughts of his heart are love, eternal love. And shall not we send out our thoughts towards him? Shall not we let our minds run out towards him?

2. In not bending their minds to this work. It may be the mind looks up, but it is so feeble, that like an arrow shot from a bow weakly bent, it reacheth not the mark. It is the wise man’s counsel, “ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.” Oh! that God’s people should be so lazy, dull, sluggish, slothful, in this spiritual work! As Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John, “ What went ye out into the wilderness to see?” So may I ask believers, in their looking unto Jesus, What went ye out to see? When you crawl, and move, as if you had no hearts nor spirits within you, whom go ye forth to see? Him that is the Lord of glory? Him that is “ the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person?” What? are such heavy

and lazy aspects fit to take in such a glory as this ? You see in what large streams your thoughts fly forth to other things, and are you only languishing, weak, and feeble in things of so great concernment ? Oh ! that Christians should be cold in spirituals, and hot in the pursuit of temporal things !

3. In not binding of their minds to this object, in not staying the eye on Jesus Christ. Some may give a glance at Christ, but they are presently wheeled off again. But why doth not the eye abide there ? Is not Christ worthy on whom our souls should dwell ? Certainly, if we love our Jesus, that love will hold us : as the load-stone having drawn the iron, keeps it fast to the object loved. Is Christ so tender in his love towards us, that he ever minds us, and shall our minds be so loose to him ? Shall there be no more care to bind ourselves in cords of love to him, who hath bound himself in such cords of love to us ?

4. In not daily exercising this blessed duty. It may be now and then they are awakened, and they get up into heaven to see their Jesus, but it is not daily. Oh ! consider, Is this now and then going to heaven within the veil, to live the life of friends ? Is this to carry ourselves as children ? What ? to be so strange at home ? There to be seldom, where we should always be ? Is Jesus Christ such a mean thing, that a visit now and then should serve the turn ? The queen of Sheba hearing Solomon's wisdom, said, "Blessed are those thy servants that always stand before thee, and hear thy wisdom." If she were so taken with Solomon, remember that a greater than Solomon is here. And shall we deprive ourselves of that blessedness, which we might enjoy by standing always in the presence of Christ, to hear his wisdom, and to behold his glory ? O my Brethren, let us take shame to ourselves, that to this day we have been so careless in sending, bending, and binding our minds to this blessed object, Jesus Christ ; yea, let us blush that we have not made it our daily business. David describes the blessed man by his " delighting in the law of the Lord," and by his

“ meditating on that law day and night ;” how then is he to be reproved that neither meditates on the law of the Lord, nor on the Lord, the Law-maker, day or night ?”

SECT. IV *Use of Exhortation.*

Is inward, experimental looking unto Jesus, a choice and high gospel-ordinance ? Then, “ I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ ; I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, to look unto Jesus.” Or, if my beseeching will not prevail, yet look on me as an ambassador of Christ ; consider as though God did beseech you by me. I beseech, I pray you in Christ’s stead ; it is a message that I have from God to your souls, to look unto Jesus ; and, therefore, “ set your hearts to all the words that I testify to you this day, for it is not a vain thing, but it is for your lives.” Oh ! that I should need thus to persuade your hearts to look unto Jesus ! What, is not your Jesus worthy of this ? Why then are your thoughts no more upon him ? Why are not your hearts continually with him ? Why are not your strongest desires, and daily delights in, and after the Lord Jesus ? What is the matter ? Will not God give you leave to approach this light ? Will he not suffer your souls to taste and see ? Why then are these words in the text ? Why then doth he cry, and double his cry, “ Behold me ! behold me ?” Ah ! vile hearts ! how delightfully and unweariedly can we think of vanity. How freely, and how frequently can we think of our pleasures, friends ; yea, of our miseries, wrongs, sufferings, and fears. And what, is not Christ in all our thoughts ? Christians, humble and cast down your sinful hearts, that have in them no more of Christ. Oh ! chide them for their wilful or weak strangeness to Jesus Christ ! Oh ! turn your thoughts from all earthly vanities, and bend your souls to study Christ ; habituate yourselves to such contemplations ; and let not those thoughts be seldom or cursory, but settle upon them ;

dwell there, bathe your souls in those delights, drench your affections in those rivers of pleasures, or rather in the sea of consolation. Have your eyes continually set on Christ. Say not, "you are unable to do thus; this must be God's work only, and therefore all our exhortations are in vain." A learned divine can tell you, though God be the chief disposer of your hearts, yet next under him you have the greatest command of them yourselves. Though "without Christ you can do nothing," yet under him you may do much; or else it will be undone, and you undone through your neglect. Do your own parts, and you have no cause to distrust whether Christ will do his. It is not usual with Christ to forsake his own people in that very work he sets them on. If your souls were sound and right, they would perceive incomparably more delight in knowing, believing, loving, and rejoicing in Jesus Christ, than the soundest stomach finds in his food, or the strongest senses in the enjoyment of their objects. Now, for shame, never say you cannot reach it. "I can do all things, (saith Paul,) through Christ that strengtheneth me." It is our sloth, our security, our carnal mind, which is enmity to God and Christ, that keeps us off. .

SECT. V. *Motives from our Wants in case of Neglect.*

To quicken us to this duty, I shall propound some moving considerations: ponder them with an impartial judgment; who knows but through the assistance of Christ they may prove effectual with your hearts, and make you resolve upon this excellent duty of looking unto Jesus. Consider, 1. our wants in case of neglect. If Christ be not in view, there is nothing but wants. Suppose, first, a Christless soul, a poor creature without any ray of this Sun of Righteousness, and what a sad condition is he in? I may say of such a one, that, First, he is without light: there is no oil of saving knowledge, no star of spiritual light arising in his soul. "Ye were

once darkness," saith the apostle to his Ephesians: not only dark, but darkness itself; they were wholly dark, universally dark, having no mixture, nor glimpse (without Christ,) of spiritual light in them. Secondly, Such a one is without grace, without holiness. Christ is our sanctification, as well as righteousness and redemption. Where Christ is not, there is no inclination to the ways and works of sanctification. Thirdly, Such a one is without content. The soul in this case finds nothing but emptiness and vanity in the greatest abundance. Let a man have what the world can give, yet if he have not Christ, he is nothing worth. Christ is the marrow and fatness, the fulness and sweetness of all our endowments; separate Christ from them, and they are bitter, and do not please us; empty, and do not fill us. Joram asking Jehu, "Is it peace?" was answered, "What hast thou to do with peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" A Christless man asking, Is it peace, O messenger of God? can look for no other but Jehu's answer, What hast thou to do with peace, so long as thy lusts are so strong within thee, and thy estrangements from the Prince of Peace so great? The soul that is without Jesus Christ, is an enemy to the God of peace, an alien to the way of peace. "There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God."

Fourthly, Such a one is without life. "He that hath not the Son, hath not life," saith John: Christ lives not in that soul, it is a dead soul, dead in sin and trespasses. As the dead see nothing of all that sweet and glorious light which the sun casts forth upon them, so the dead in sin have no comfortable apprehension of Christ, though he shine in the gospel more gloriously than the sun at noon. And as "the dead know not any thing;" so the dead in sin know nothing of the wisdom of Christ guiding them, or of the holiness of Christ sanctifying them, or of the fulness of Christ satisfying them,

or of the death of Christ mortifying their lusts : yea, suppose those that have known Christ, but do not look now unto Jesus, how great is the sin and sadness of those souls !

Oh ! the wants attending such poor creatures ! 1. They have not that wisdom, knowledge, discerning of Christ, as they might have. By looking, and seriously observing Christ, we gain more and more knowledge of Christ ; but if we will not look, how should we understand those great mysteries of grace ? Without looking on Christ, we cannot expect that virtue should go out of Christ. 2. They do not so taste the goodness of Christ as they might : Christ is no other unto them, but as an eclipsed star : Christ is not sweet to them in his ordinances, they find not in them that delight and refreshment which they usually minister. They are in the case of Barzillai, " who could not taste what he did eat, or what he did drink ; nor could hear any more the voice of singing men or of singing women." So they cannot taste the things of God, nor hear the spiritual melody which Christ makes to the souls of them that look unto him. 3. They have not that sense of Christ's love, which those that exercise this duty have. Whilst the soul neglects Christ, it cannot possibly discern the love of Christ ; it perceives not Christ applying the doctrines of his love to the conscience : Christ appears not in his banqueting-house ; he enables not the soul to pray with confidence, he makes it not joyful in the house of prayer. And hence it is, that such souls move so slowly in God's service ; they are just like Pharoah's chariots, without wheels ; they perceive not the love of Christ either in the clear revelation of his secrets, or in the free community of his graces, or in the sanctifying and sweetening of their trials, or in sealing the pardon of their sins. Oh ! the want ! oh ! the misery of this want !

Thus far of their wants that neglect this duty of looking unto Jesus.

Sect. VI. Motives from our Riches, in case we are lively in this Duty.

For our riches, in case we are lively in this duty. Oh! the blessed incomes to such souls! We may reckon up here those very particulars which the other wanted:

1. That Christ gives light unto them. As the receiving of the sun gives light to the body, so the receiving of the Sun of Righteousness gives spiritual, heavenly, comfortable light to their souls. 2. That Christ gives grace and holiness unto them. "Of his fulness we receive grace for grace." As the print upon the wax answers to the seal, or as the characters upon the Son answer to the Father; so there are certain stamps of the grace of Christ upon the saints, that what good they do, it springs not from external motives only, but from Christ working in them. 3. That Christ gives content or satisfaction unto them. As the pearl satisfied the merchant in the parable, so Christ satisfieth the soul with understanding, with the sense of his love in the heart, with sure and blessed peace in the conscience. They that rightly look unto Jesus, may say, as Jacob did, "I have enough." 4. That Christ gives life unto them. "He that hath the Son hath life." He that hath Christ in his heart, as a root of life living in him, or as a king setting up his throne within him, or as a bridegroom betrothing himself in loving-kindness to him, he hath life, the life of grace, and the earnest of the life of glory. 5. That Christ gives a taste of his goodness unto them. They cannot look unto him, but he makes them joyful with the feeling of himself and Spirit: and hence it is that many times they break out into psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, and make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. Here is a goodness of illumination, regeneration, sanctification, and spiritual freedom, flowing from Christ to the souls of his saints, which to carnal men is a sealed well, whose waters their palates never tasted. 6. That Christ gives

the sense of his love to them. They cannot look on Christ, but they see him loving and embracing their humble souls ; they see him binding up their broken hearts ; they behold him gathering to himself, and bearing in the bosom of his love, and comforting with the promises of his word their wounded spirits ; they behold him like Jacob, serving in the heat and in the cold for Rachel, serving in manifold afflictions from his cradle to his cross, to make a spouse unto himself. 7. That Christ gives the sense of his own worth and excellency unto them. They see now in Christ his wisdom surpassing the brightness of the sun, even all the treasures of wisdom ; in Christ is power excelling the strength of rocks ; he is not only strong, but strength itself ; in Christ is honour transcending all the kings of the earth, for he is King of kings and Lord of lords ; in Christ is beauty excelling the rose of Sharon, and lily of the vallies ; he is fairer than all the flowers of the field, than all the precious stones of the earth, than all the lights in the firmament, than all the saints and angels in the highest heavens. 8. That Christ gives all things unto them. “ All things are yours (saith the apostle,) whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

All things are yours : First, all the ministers of Christ, from the highest to the lowest, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas ; they are your servants, they are men that watch over you for your salvation. Secondly, the world is yours : indeed the world stands but for your sakes ; if your number were but once completed, quickly would the world be set on fire. Thirdly, life is yours : it is a fitting you for a better life, even for eternity. Fourthly, death is yours : for you shall die just then when it is best for you. Death shall serve but as a servant to your advantage. Fifthly, things present, and things to come, are yours. “ Godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.” Sixthly, the

Lord himself is yours : take God, and look on him in his greatness, in his mighty power, even this great God, the Lord of heaven and earth, is yours : he is yours, and all that he hath is yours, and all that he doth is yours, and all that he can do is yours. "I will be thine (saith God to Abraham) I will be an exceeding great reward." Here is a catalogue, an inventory of a Christian's riches : have Christ and have all. When an heathen was asked, where all his treasure was, he answered, "Where Cyrus my friend is :" and if any ask you, where all your treasure is, you may answer, "Where Christ my friend is :" in this respect you may truly say, there is no end of your riches ; they are called "the unsearchable riches of Christ." Paul could find no bottom of these riches. Oh ! who would not look unto Jesus ? If Christ be yours, God is yours, the Father is yours, the Son is yours, the Spirit is yours, all the promises are yours ; for in Christ they are all made, and for him they shall be performed. Come, let the proud man boast in his honour, and the mighty man in his valour, and the rich man in his wealth ; but let the Christian pronounce himself happy, only happy, truly happy, fully happy, in beholding Christ, enjoying Christ, having Christ, in looking unto Jesus.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,
*FROM THE CREATION UNTIL HIS FIRST
COMING.*

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP I.

SECT. I. *Of Christ promised by Degrees.*

IN this period we shall first lay down the object ; and then direct you how to look upon it. The object is Jesus, carrying on the work of man's salvation in that dark time before his coming in the flesh. No sooner was the world made, and the things therein, but man was created. And now it was that God's eternal purpose was to come into execution. Indeed at the first there was no need of Christ ; for man was made in holiness, in the image of God, and to bear rule over the rest of the visible creatures. This his state, however, was but of short duration ; for it was not long before Adam by his sin deprived himself, and all his posterity, of the image of God. All mankind were in his loins, so by the appointment of God all mankind partake with him in the guilt of his sins.

In this sad hour of temptation God stepped in. He would not leave man without hope. He tells the devil, who begun this mischief, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

At the very instant, when God was pronouncing judgment upon the several delinquents, nay, before judgment was pronounced on the persons tempted, Jesus is hinted, the covenant of grace is proclaimed. Oh! the infinite riches of the mercy of God in Christ! But you will say, How comes Jesus in? How carried he on the great work of our salvation in this dark time?

I answer, 1. By assuming the shape of man, and so discharging some special offices. We read often of Christ's apparition before his incarnation, and then especially when he had to do with man's eternal happiness. After man had sinned, Christ appeared to Adam, then to Abraham, then to Isaac, then to Jacob, then to Moses. First, he appeared to Adam in the garden: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." God, as he is God, hath neither voice to speak, nor feet to walk, but assuming the form of a man he exercised both; and so he was the first that published that first promise to the world, "It shall bruise thy head." 2. He appeared to Abraham "in the plain of Mamre," where the Lord talked with Abraham; and Abraham calls him "the Judge of all the earth," which can be ascribed to none but Christ, the Judge of quick and dead. 3. He appeared to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 2; and to Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, 30; and to Moses, Exod. xx. 1, 2, 3; and to many others: and these apparitions of Christ were as preludes to his incarnation.

2. Christ carried on the great work of our salvation in that dark time, not by himself exhibited, (as when he was incarnate,) but only promised. The great King would first have his harbingers to lead the way, before he would come in person. To this purpose we read, that as Christ, so the covenant of grace, (which applies Christ to us,) was first promised, and then promulgated. The covenant of promise was that covenant which God made with Adam, Abraham, Moses, and David, and all Israel, in Jesus Christ; to be incarnate, crucified, and to rise from the dead; and it was meet that the promise

should go before the gospel, and be fulfilled in the gospel, that so great a good might earnestly be desired before it was bestowed. In a time of darkness men desire light. As the morning watch watcheth and longeth for the morning, so the obscure revelation of Christ in a promise raised the hearts of the patriarchs to an earnest desire of Christ's coming in the flesh. But in this obscurity we may observe some degrees. Before the law given by Moses the promise was more obscure; the law being given, even to the time of the prophets, the promise was a little more clear. In the time of the prophets, even to John the Baptist, it was clearer yet; as the coming of the Messias did approach nearer and nearer, so was the promise clearer and clearer still. Just as the approach of the sun is nearer or further off, so the light that precedes its rising is greater or less. In like manner was the revelation that went before Christ more dim or clear, as the rising of the Sun of Righteousness was more remote, or more nigh at hand. My present business is to set forth Jesus in the covenant of grace as promised; and because the promise receives distinction of degrees according to the several manifestations of it to the dark world, we will consider it as it was discovered, 1. From Adam till Abraham. 2. From Abraham till Moses. 3. From Moses till David. 4. From David till the Babylonish captivity. 5. From the captivity till Christ. In each of these periods will appear further and further manifestations of God's mercy in Christ; of our Jesus carrying on the great work of man's salvation in that dark time.

SECT. II. Of the Covenant of Promise as intimated to Adam.

The covenant of grace is a compact made betwixt God and man, touching reconciliation and life eternal by Christ. This gracious covenant was, immediately after the fall, expressed in these words, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and

her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This promise contains good news of the overthrow of satan's kingdom, and of man's deliverance by the death of Christ.

For the sense of the words we shall open these terms ; 1. Who is the serpent ? 2. Who is the woman ? 3. What is the seed of the serpent ? 4. What is the Seed of the woman ? 5. What is that *hu*, [in our Bible translated *it* ?] 6. What is the serpent's head, and the bruising of it ? 7. What is the heel of the Seed of the woman, and the bruising of it ? 8. Amongst whom was the enmity, or rather enmities ? (for in the text we find many,) "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."

1. Who is the serpent ? It was both satan and the serpent ; the serpent possessed of the devil. Satan could not provoke our first parents to sin by any inward temptation, nor could he enter into their bodies or minds ; and therefore he presumed to take a beast of the earth, and by disposing of his tongue he speaks within him. Such was God's love to man, that he condemns both the author and instrument of that evil, as one that in anger breaks the sword wherewith his son or his friend was wounded. The serpent is punished according to the letter of the text, and satan in the spiritual meaning.

2. The woman, wheresoever mentioned in this text, is Eve, and none but Eve ; she it was whom the tempter had seduced, and in just judgment for her familiarity with the tempter, God meets with her, saying to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman."

3. The seed of the serpent is taken collectively, for all the families of devils, for the devil and his angels (as Christ calls them,) and for all the sons of the devil, i. e. for all reprobate men, whose father and prince is the devil ; as Christ told the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." And, as John tells us, "He that committeth sin is of the devil.

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."

4. The seed of the woman is that posterity of the woman which do not degenerate into the seed of the serpent. Hence "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," (saith the apostle;) "And I will put enmity, (saith God,) between thee and the woman; also between thy seed and her seed." And who can deny but these enmities have been ever since betwixt satan's brood and the saints?

5. What is that *hu*, [in our Bible translated *it*?] "It shall bruise thy head?" *He*, or *it*, or that same *seed*, i. e. one person of that same seed, even Jesus, the Son of the living God. Here is the first hint of Jesus that ever was read or heard of in this world. This was the first gospel that ever was published after the creation. Oh! blessed news, fit for God's mouth to speak, and to break first to the world now fallen! As David alone, of all the host of Israel, goes forth to fight with Goliah, and overcomes him; so Christ alone, of all the seed of the woman, was to fight with the serpent, to overcome him, and to bruise his head. (2.) The bruising of the head doth plainly discover that this *it*, or *he*, is Jesus Christ: for none can bruise the serpent's head but only God. "The God of peace," saith the apostle, "shall bruise satan under your feet shortly." Now there was none of the seed of the woman that was ever God, but only Christ, God-man, blessed for ever; and therefore it must needs be Christ, and only Christ, that can bruise this serpent's head. (3.) God himself, in other places of Scripture, doth expressly declare that this seed here promised is Christ. Observe but where this promise is repeated to the patriarchs, as when the Lord said to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" and when the Lord said to David, "I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom;" and you may see it clear that this seed is Christ, and only Christ. That

promise to Abraham the apostle so interprets, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made; he saith not, and to seeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." And that promise to David, the prophet so interprets, "He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it." Who is this? In the former verse his name is, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace."

Yet I will not deny, but, by way of participation, this promise may pertain to the whole body of Christ. "Through him that loved us, we are more than conquerors," saith the apostle. We may conquer satan, though not in our own strength; and so, in a secondary sense, by way of communication with Christ, under this seed all the faithful may be contained: 1. Because the head and members are all one body. "Both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one." 2. Because the faithful are called the seed of Christ. "When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed." 3. Because satan's overthrow, by Christ, our Head, is diffused to all the members. In this sense many extend this seed to the whole body of Christ: but primarily and properly it belongs to none but the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. What is the serpent's head, and the bruising of it? 1. For the serpent's head, it is the power, rage, reign, and kingdom of satan. It is observed, that in the head of a serpent lies the strength, power, and life of a serpent; so by a phrase of speech, fitted to the condition of this serpent that was satan's instrument, God tells the devil of the danger of his head, i. e. of his power and kingdom. Now this power and kingdom of satan consists more especially in sin and death; for "the sting of death is sin, and the power of death is in satan." 2. For the bruising of this head, it is the overthrowing of satan's power. "He shall bruise thy head," i. e. Christ shall break thy power, Christ shall destroy sin, and death, and

“ him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil.” I say Christ shall do it, though as I have said in a secondary sense the faithful shall do it. Christ overcomes by his own power, and the faithful overcome by the power of Christ. The serpent’s head is bruised, i. e. the devil, and sin, and death, and hell are overthrown ; not only the devil in his person, but the works of the devil, which by the fall he had planted in our natures ; as pride, vanity, ignorance, lust ; not only satan’s works, but the fruits and effects of his works, as death and hell ; so that all the faithful may sing with Paul, “ O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

7. What is the heel of the seed of the woman, and the bruising of it ? 1. The heel is the humanity of Christ. 2. The bruising of his heel, is the miseries, mockings, woundings, death, and burial of Christ, all which he endured in his heel, i. e. in his humanity ; or, it extends further, to all the hurts, reproaches, afflictions, persecutions of the faithful by the devil and his agents.

8. Among whom was the enmity, or this hostile war ? We find in the text three hosts, and three battles : 1. Betwixt satan and the woman, “ I will put enmity between thee and the woman : ” i. e. betwixt thee the seducer, and her whom thou hast seduced. This enmity is opposed to the amity, which had been between the woman and the serpent ; not but that enmity must be betwixt the devil and the man, as well as betwixt the devil and the woman : but because the woman had more tampered with satan, and being deceived by satan, was first in the transgression, therefore she is only named, “ I will put enmity between thee and the woman.” 2. Betwixt satan’s seed and the seed of the woman. “ I will put enmity,” not only between thee and the woman, but also “ between thy seed and her seed,” as if he had said, This enmity shall not cease with the death of the woman, but it shall continue to her seed, and to her seed’s seed, even to the

end of the world. We see to this day how the serpent and the serpent's seed are warring against the church ; and a wonder it is (considering the malice of the enemy) that there is a church upon earth, but only that we have Christ's promise, " The gates of hell shall not prevail against it ; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world." 3. Betwixt Christ and the serpent. This is a bloody conflict on both sides. " He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." 1. He shall bruise thy head ; Christ shall break thy power. He fights not so much with the seed, as with the serpent : if satan be overthrown, his seed cannot stand. 2. Thou shalt bruise his heel ; thou shalt afflict him and his, thou shalt cast out of thy mouth a flood of persecutions ; thou shalt " make war with him, and all them which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

We learn hence, 1. That a Saviour was promised from the beginning of the world. 2. That this Saviour should free all his saints from sin, death, and hell ; the head and the power of the devil. 3. That to this end this Saviour should be a Mediator ; for God would not grant an immediate pardon, but the promised seed must first intervene. 4. That this Mediator should be of the seed of the woman ; that is, a man, and yet stronger than the devil, endued with a Divine power, and so he is God. 5. That this Man-God should, according to his priestly office, be a sacrifice for sin, the serpent should bruise his heel, he should suffer and die for the people ; and yet according to his kingly office he should overcome satan ; for he should bruise his head, overthrow his kingdom, and make us more than conquerors. 6. That this promise of Christ, and of our justification is free ; God of mere mercy and free grace, brings forth this promise. There could be now after the fall no merit in man ; and even now he promiseth remission of sins, and life eternal, in, for, and through the Lord Jesus Christ. No question but in belief of this promise, the patriarchs and fathers of old obtained life, and glory, and immortality. By faith the elders ob-

tained a good report. "By faith Abel obtained witness that he was righteous. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. By faith Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." And how should it but revive us in these last times, to hear that the first thing that ever God did after the world was fallen, was this act of mercy, to make a promise of Christ, and to reconcile lost man to himself through the same Jesus Christ? Surely he began to do that soon, which he meant to be always doing, even to the end of the world. Thus far of the promise, as it was manifested from Adam to Abraham.

SECT. III. Of the Covenant of Promise as manifested to Abraham.

THE second discovery of this gracious covenant was to Abraham; and now it shines in a more glorious light than it did before. At first it was propounded in dark terms; but in this second manifestation, we have it laid down in plainer terms: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee." For the right understanding of this, we shall examine these particulars:—1. What a covenant is? 2. What is the establishing of this covenant? 3. Betwixt whom is the covenant to be established? 4. For what time is the established covenant to endure? 5. What are the privileges of this covenant? 6. What is the condition of this covenant? 7. Who is the head, both as the undertaker, purchaser, and treasurer, upon whom this covenant is established?

1. What is a covenant? *It is a contract of mutual peace and good-will, obliging parties on both hands to the performance of mutual offices.* Thus was the covenant betwixt God and Abraham; there was a mutual stipulation in it on God's part, to perform his promises of temporal, spiritual, and eternal grace; and on Abraham's part, to receive this grace by faith, and to perform due

obedience to God. Hence a little nearer, we say the covenant is a mutual compact betwixt God and man, whereby God promises all good things, especially eternal happiness, unto man ; and man promises to walk before God in all acceptable, free, and willing obedience, expecting all good from God, and happiness in God, according to his promise, for the praise and glory of his grace. Others describe the covenant of grace thus : “ The covenant of grace is a free and gracious compact, which God, of his mere mercy in Jesus Christ, hath made with sinful man, promising unto him pardon of sins and eternal happiness, if he will but repent of sin, and embrace mercy reaching forth by faith unfeigned, and walk before God in willing, faithful, and sincere obedience.” In this description many things are considered : as, 1. That the author of this covenant is God ; not as our Creator, but as our merciful God and Father in Christ Jesus. 2. That the cause of this covenant is not any worth, or dignity, or merit in man, but the mere mercy, love, and favour of God. 3. That the foundation of this covenant is Jesus Christ, in and through whom we are reconciled unto God ; for since God and man were separated by sin, no covenant can pass betwixt them, no reconciliation can be expected, nor pardon obtained but in and through a Mediator. 4. That the party covenanted with is sinful man. The fall of our first parents was the occasion of this covenant ; and God was pleased to permit the fall, that he might manifest the riches of his mercy in man’s recovery. 5. That the form of this covenant stands on God’s part in gracious and free promises of forgiveness, holiness, and happiness ; and on man’s part in a restipulation of such duties as will stand with the free grace and mercy of God in Christ. 6. That the stipulation on man’s part required, is repentance from sin, belief in the promises, and a yielding of fear, reverence, worship, and obedience to God according to his word.

2. What is the establishment of this covenant ? The

Lord had before made a covenant with Abraham, Gen. xv. 4, 5. And now he doth not abolish the former, and make another ; but rather confirms, and establishes the former. It may be there was some doubting in Abraham ; but now God would assure him infallibly of his will. So he adds the seal of circumcision, “ Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin, (saith God) and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.” But what is circumcision to the covenant ? Much every way. Circumcision was not without shedding of blood, because the covenant was not yet established in the blood of the Messiah. Sure there was much in this. However the rite of itself was nothing ; yet as it led the faithful patriarchs to the blood of Christ, and as it assured the purging away of sin by the blood of Christ, and as it signed the circumcision of the heart by the Spirit of Christ, so it found acceptance with God.

3. Betwixt whom is the covenant to be established ? “ Betwixt me and thee,” saith God, “ and thy seed after thee.” The two heads of this covenant are God and Abraham ; on God’s part are the whole Trinity of Persons, the blessed angels, and all the host of heaven ; on Abraham’s part are all his seed ; (i. e.) the spiritual seed of Abraham. Now under the seed, 1. All believing Jews, and 2. All believing Gentiles are comprehended. All may be called the spiritual seed of Abraham, that walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, and indeed thus runs the promise, “ In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” Gen. xii. 3. “ And in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed,” Gen. xviii. 18. Christians ! here is your happiness ; the covenant was not written for Abraham’s sake alone, “ but for us also, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.” You may think all this while we are only discovering the privileges of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of the Jews ; no, blessed be God ! heaven is no freer to a Jew than to a Gentile. “ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, male nor female. But if ye be

Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

4. For what time is the established covenant to endure ? It is not for a few days, or months, or years, but for ever and ever ; it is an everlasting covenant ; and indeed the word *established*, sounds this way, " I will establish my covenant," I will have it stand and continue for ever.

5. What are the privileges of the covenant ? I answer, As they are great things, and great blessings which our great God promiseth, so they are very many and numerous. The covenant is full of blessings ; it is a rich store-house, replenished with all manner of blessings ; it is not dry, nor barren, but like the fat olive or fruitful vine ; it is a well of salvation, a fountain of good things, a treasure full of goods or unsearchable riches, which can never be emptied. Hence it is that our narrow capacities can never apprehend the infinite grace that this covenant contains ; yet as we may see things darkly in a map, so let us endeavour, as we are able, to view them in some map, that by the little we see, we may be raised up to the consideration of things not seen, which shall be revealed in due time. The privileges of the covenant are folded up in the promises of it. Every promise contains a privilege, but the time of unfolding every promise is not yet come. Then only shall all the promises of all sorts be unfolded, when the heavens as " a vesture shall be folded up." I shall for the present confine myself to those promises and privileges which were manifested to Abraham. And they were,

First, Of things temporal. Thus we read God promiseth Abraham, " I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing ; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and unto thy seed will I give this land. By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate

of his enemies." 1. "I will make of thee a great nation." It seemed a thing incredible, because Abraham was old, and Sarah was barren and old ; yet for all this, God is all-sufficient ; Abraham shall have his desire, he shall be a father, not only of a few children, but of a numerous nation, yea of many nations. 2. "I will bless thee," saith God : and this blessing had relation to his wealth. "Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." No question those riches came from this blessing. "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich." 3. "I will make thy name great," saith God. No monarch was ever so famous in conquering nations, as Abraham for his faith and obedience. God hath magnified his name amongst the Hebrews, who for these three thousand years and upwards have acknowledged none (except Moses) greater than Abraham. And God hath so magnified his name amongst Christians, that all believers look upon it as a glory to be called children of Abraham. 4. "Unto thy seed I will give this land," saith God, "as an everlasting possession," Gen. xvii. 8. The answer is, that the word translated *everlasting*, doth not ever signify that which shall have no end, but an age, a term, or continuance ; as it was said of Samuel, "He should appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever," i. e. as long as he lived. And the desolations of the captivity were called perpetual desolations, i. e. long desolations, even for seventy years.

Secondly, Of things spiritual, thus we read, "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward ; I am God all-sufficient or omnipotent, the Almighty God, and I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee :" Oh ! what precious promises are these ! —1. "I am thy shield," to keep thee from all evil, such a shield that no creature can pry through, such a shield as shall cover thee over ; nay, such a shield as shall cover thee about.—2. I am thy exceeding great reward : I am the Almighty God : I will be a God unto thee." This is the very soul of the covenant, and of all the promises of God. All I am is thine, myself, my goods, my grace, my

glory, whatsoever is in me, all that I have, and all my attributes are thine. My power, my wisdom, my goodness, my riches, whatsoever is mine in the whole world, I will give it thee for thy portion. I and all that I have are thine for thy use.—Christians ! was not this an exceeding great reward ?—Who can understand the heighth, and depth, and length, and breadth of this reward ?—Surely happy are the people that are in such a case ; yea, “ happy are the people whose God is the Lord.”

6. What is the condition of this covenant ? I answer, the condition of the covenant of grace, is faith, and only faith ; to this purpose it was said of Abraham, “ He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.” And that act of faith, whereby Abraham believed that he should have a son, and that his children should possess the land of Canaan, was a shadow, a pledge of that main act of faith, whereby he believed in the promised seed, in whom himself and all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But let this be remembered, that Abraham did not only believe the temporal promises, but every promise ; as “ I will be thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward :” now who is our shield but Christ ? And who is our reward but Christ ? Especially he believed the promise of the seed : and who is the head of the seed but Christ ? Yea, he believed in that promised seed, “ in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed ;” and who was that but Christ ?—“ Your father Abraham,” saith Christ, “ rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.” He saw it ? How could he see it ? “ Thou art not yet fifty years old,” said the Jews, “ and hast thou seen Abraham ?” Or could Abraham see thee, or thy day ?—Yes, even then he saw it when he believed in Christ. He could see it no other ways but by faith ; and therefore no question he believed in Christ, and that was counted to him for righteousness.

7. Who is the head both as undertaker, and purchaser, and treasurer, upon whom this covenant is established ? I answer, Christ : “ All the promises of God in him are

yea and amen, unto the glory of God by us." This was darkly set forth in the first manifestation of the covenant to Adam, but in this second, it is fully expressed and often repeated; thus Gen. xii. 3, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed;" and Gen. xviii. 18, "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham;" and Gen. xxii. 18, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." In comparing these texts we have a clear understanding thereof; *In thee*, in Abraham, shall all the families and nations of the earth be blessed; but lest Abraham himself should be thought author of this universal blessing, therefore is the explication, *in thee*, i. e. in thy seed; which saith the apostle expressly, is Jesus Christ.

Thus far of the covenant of promise as it was manifested from Abraham to Moses.

SECT. IV. *Of the Covenant of Promise as manifested to Moses.*

THE next discovery of this gracious covenant was to Moses. The revenging justice of God had now seized on mankind for many generations, so that now it was high time for God in the midst of wrath to remember mercy, and to break out into a clearer expression of the promise. To this purpose the Lord calls up Moses to mount Sinai, and there of his infinite love and undeserved mercy he makes and renews his covenant with him and the children of Israel. "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the house of bondage: thou shalt have no other Gods before me." For the right understanding of this, we shall examine these particulars: 1. Whether the law was delivered in a covenant way? 2. In what sense is the law a covenant of grace? 3. How may it appear that the law in any sense is a covenant of grace? 4. Why should God in the law deal with us in a covenant-way, rather than a mere absolute supreme way? 5. What are the good things promised in this expression of the covenant?

6. What is the condition of this covenant on our part ?
7 Who was the Mediator of this covenant ? 8. What of Christ, and his death, do we find in this manifestation of the covenant ?

For the first, whether the law was delivered in a covenant-way ?—It is affirmed on these grounds. 1. In that it hath the name of a covenant. 2. In that it hath the real properties of a covenant. 1. The name of a covenant as it appears in these texts : “ And the Lord said unto Moses, write these words ; for after the tenor of these words, I have made a covenant with thee, and with Israel. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.—And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments, and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. 2. The law hath the real properties of a covenant, which are the mutual consent and stipulation on both sides. You may see a full relation of this in Exod. xxiv 3—8 ; “ And Moses came and told all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments : and all the people answered with one voice, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning,—and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, All that the Lord hath said, will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.” In the words you may observe these properties of a covenant ;—1. That God on his part expresseth his consent and willingness to be their God.—2. That the people on their part give their full consent and ready willingness to be his servants.

2. In what sense is the law a covenant of grace ? I answer, the law may be considered in several senses ; as, 1. Sometimes it signifies largely any heavenly doctrine, whether it be promise or precept, and in this sense the apostle tell us of the law of works, and of the law of

faith.—2. Sometimes it signifies any part of the Old Testament, in which sense Jesus answered the Jews, “ Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods ? ” 3. Sometimes it signifies the whole economy and peculiar dispensation of God’s worship unto the Jews, in which sense it is said to continue until John, “ The law and the prophets were until John.”—4. Sometimes it is taken for some acts of the law only, “ Against such there is no law.”—5. Sometimes it is taken only for the ceremonial law, “ The law having a shadow of good things to come.”—6. Sometimes it is taken for that part of the moral law, which is merely preceptive, without any promise at all.—7. Sometimes it is taken for the whole moral law, with the preface and promises added to it ; and in this last sense we take it, when we say it is a covenant of grace.

3. How may it appear that the law in this sense is a covenant of grace ?—It appears, 1. By that contract betwixt God and Israel before the promulgation of the law. “ If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Whereunto the prophet Jeremiah hath reference, saying, “ Obey my voice, and do according to all which I command you, so shall you be my people, and I will be your God.” Both these Scriptures speak of the moral law, or ten commandments, containing the preface and promises ; and how should that law be any other but a covenant of grace, which runs in this tenor, “ I will be your God, and you shall be my people ; my peculiar treasure ; a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, if you will hear and obey my commandments.” Surely these privileges could never have been obtained by a covenant of works. What ? To be a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, a peculiar treasure to the Lord ? What ? To be beloved of God as a desirable treasure (for so it is in the original) which a king delivers not into the hands of any of his officers, but keepeth it to himself ? This cannot be of works :

No, no ; these are privileges vouchsafed of mere grace in Jesus Christ ; and therefore Peter applies this very promise to the people of God under the gospel, 1 Pet. ii. 9. 2. It appears by that contract betwixt God and Israel in the promulgation of the law ; then it was that God proclaimed himself to be the God of Israel, saying, " I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." This is a preface to the whole law, prefixed as a reason to persuade obedience to every commandment. But all acknowledge that it is a free covenant, which promiseth pardon of sin, and requireth faith in the Messiah. When God saith to Israel, " I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt," doth he not propound himself as their King, Judge, Saviour, and Redeemer ; yea, and spiritual Redeemer, from their bondage of sin and satan, whereof that temporal deliverance from Egypt was a type ?

4. Why should God in the law deal with us in a covenant-way rather than in a mere absolute supreme way ? I answer, (1,) In respect of God. It was his pleasure in giving the law, not only to manifest his wisdom, and power, and sovereignty, but his faithfulness, and truth, and love, and the glory of his grace. If he had given the precept without any promise, he might fully have discovered his supreme power, but his dear love and faithfulness could not have been known. Now, therefore, let the world take notice of his singular love and faithfulness ; as Moses said to Israel, " Because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the hands of bondmen, from the hand of Pharoah, king of Egypt. Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations. (2.) In respect of us, God would rather deal with us in a covenant-way, than in a mere absolute supreme way, upon this ground : That

he might bind us the faster to himself. A covenant binds on both parts. The Lord doth not bind himself to us, and leave us free ; no, " I will bring you, (said God,) into the bond of the covenant." You may say a command binds as well as a covenant. It is true ; but a covenant doth, as it were, twist the cords of the law, and double the precept upon the soul. When it is only a precept, then God alone commands it, but when I have made a promise to it, then I command it and bind it upon myself.

(3.) That our obedience might be more willing and free. An absolute law might seem to extort obedience, but a covenant and agreement makes it clearly to appear more free and willing. This is the nature of the covenant of grace : first, God promiseth in mercy to be our exceeding great reward ; and then we promise obedience, to be his free, willing people ; and thus we become God's, not only by a property founded in his sovereign power and love, but by a property growing out of our own voluntary consents. We are not only his people, but his willing people.

(4.) That our consolations might be stronger ; that in all our difficulties and distresses we might ever have recourse to the faithfulness and love of God. This, indeed, was the prime end why God delivered his law in the way of a covenant, that he might endear himself to us, and so draw us to him with cords of love. Had God so pleased, he might have required all obedience from us, and when we had done all, he might have reduced us into nothing, or at least not have given us heaven for an inheritance, or himself for a portion ; but his love is such, that he will not only command, but he will covenant, that he might further express and communicate his love. How then should this encourage us to go to God in all distresses. Oh ! what thankful, loving thoughts should we have of God, that would thus infinitely condescend to covenant with us !

5. What are the good things promised in this expression of the covenant ? Not to reckon up the temporal promises, the great mercies of God are expressed in these

terms, “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” This is the great promise of the covenant, it is as great as God himself. That we may better see it, and know it, I shall take it in pieces. The gold is so pure, that it is pity the least filing should be lost. Here God describes himself by these notes.—1. By his only eternal and perfect essence, “I am the Lord.” 2. By the plurality of persons in that one essence, “I am the Lord God, Jehovah Elohim.” 3. By the propriety his people have in Jehovah Elohim, “I am the Lord thy God.” 4. By the fruit of that propriety in reference to Israel, “Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

(1.) I am Jehovah. This name denotes both his Being, and his performance of his promise. Thus he was not known to the patriarchs. They only were sustained by faith in God’s almighty power, without receiving the thing promised ; but when the Israelites came to receive the promise, and to have full knowledge and experience of his power and goodness, then they knew the efficacy of his name Jehovah.

(2.) “I am Jehovah Elohim.” This denotes the plurality of persons. God in delivering of the law, doth not only shew his Being, but the manner of his Being ; or the trinity of persons in the unity of essence. The word signifies *strong, potent, mighty* ; or if we express it plurally, it signifies the *Almighty*, or the *almighty Powers*. Hence the Scriptures apply the general name, God, to the Persons severally, the Father is God, Heb. i. 1, 2 ; the Son is God, Acts xx. 28 ; and the Holy Ghost is God, Acts v. 3, 4.

(3.) “I am the Lord thy God.” Herein is the propriety, and indeed here is the mercy that God speaks thus to every faithful soul, I am thy God. By this appropriation God gives us a right in him ; yea, a possession of him. A right in him ; as the woman may say of him to whom she is married, this man is my husband, so may every faithful soul say of the Lord, he is my God. A possession

of him : God doth not only shew himself unto us, but he doth communicate himself unto us in his holiness, mercy, truth, grace, and goodness ; hence it is said, " We have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Herein God gives himself to be wholly ours, consider God essentially, or personally. Consider Jehovah Elohim, all is ours. God in his essence, and glorious attributes, communicates himself to us for good, and God personally considered, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they all enter into covenant with us. 1. The Father enters into covenant with us. He promises to be a Father to us ; hence saith the Lord, " Israel is my son, my first-born." 2. The Son is in covenant with us, and speaks to us in this language, " Thou art mine ; I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, and therefore thou art mine." This is Christ's covenant with us ; he brings us back to his Father, from whose presence we were banished, and sets us before his face for ever. He promiseth to restore us to the adoption of sons ; and not only to the title, but to the inheritance of sons, that we might be where he is. 3. The Holy Ghost makes a covenant with us. " By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified ; whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness. This is the covenant that I will make with them, I will put my law into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." I know the Father is implied in this, yet here is the proper work of the Holy Ghost. What the Father hath purposed, and the Son hath purchased for us, that the Holy Ghost effects in us. He applies the blood of Christ for the remission of sins. He writes the law in our hearts. He comforts us in our sadness ; supports us in our faintings, and guides us in our wanderings. Now in that he effects these things for us, and in our behalf, he is said to make a covenant with us. Thus Elohim, God personally considered, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are in covenant with us.

(4.) Let us see the fruit of this in reference to Israel : " Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of

the house of bondage." This was God's promise long before to Abraham, " Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge. And afterwards they shall come out with great substance." See here Israel must be strangers in the land of Egypt, and serve the Egyptians four hundred years ; but then he will bring them out of the land of Egypt, and out of their servile bondage. Why, this argues that God is Jehovah. Now he has performed what he had foretold, and this argues that God in Christ is our Redeemer. For what was this redemption from Egypt, but a type of our freedom from sin, death, and hell ?

6. What is the condition of this covenant on our part ? The condition of this covenant is faith in Jesus, which is implied in the promise, " I will be thy God ;" or, " I am the Lord thy God ;" and commanded in the precept built upon it, " Thou shalt have me to be thy God ;" or, " Thou shalt have no other gods but me." But where is faith in Jesus Christ mentioned either in promise or precept ? I answer, if it be not expressed, it is very plainly intended. God is not the God of Israel but in and through the Mediator. Neither can Israel take God to be their God but by faith in the Messiah. But to go further, what is the meaning of this first commandment in the affirmative part, but to have one God in Christ to be our God by faith ? It is true, there is no mention made of Christ, or faith, but that is nothing. There is no mention of love, and yet our Saviour discovers it here ; when the lawyer tempted Christ, " Master, which is the great commandment in the law ?" You know Christ's answer, " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, this is the first and great commandment," Matt. xxii. 36, 37, 38. Now as our Saviour discovers love there, so in like manner is faith and Christ there the necessary consequents.

But you may object, What say we to obedience ? Is

not that rather the condition of this covenant in the law ? The law is considered either more strictly, as it is a rule of righteousness, setting forth life upon no other terms but perfect obedience ; or more largely, as that whole doctrine delivered on Mount Sinai, with the preface and promises adjoined : in the former sense it is a covenant of works *, but in the latter it is a covenant of grace. And yet I dare not say, that as the law is a covenant of grace, it doth exclude obedience. In some sort, obedience, as well as faith, may be said to be a condition of the covenant of grace. I shall give you my thoughts in this distinction. Obedience to all God's commands is either considered as a cause of life, or as a qualification. In the former sense it cannot be a condition of the covenant of grace, but in the latter it may. If by condition we understand whatsoever is required on our part, as precedent, concomitant, or subsequent to the covenant of grace, repentance, faith, and obedience, are all conditions ; but if by condition we understand whatsoever is required on our part, as the cause of the good promised, though only instrumental, why then faith is the only condition. Faith and obedience are opposed in the matter of justification and salvation, not that they cannot stand together, (for they are inseparably united;) but because they cannot meet together in one court, as the cause of justification or salvation. Now, when we speak of the condition of the covenant of grace, we intend such a condition as is among the number of true causes. Indeed in the covenant of works, obedience is required as the cause of life ; but in the covenant of grace, though obedience must accompany faith, yet only faith is the cause of life contained in the covenant.

7. Of this covenant Moses was a typical, but Christ the spiritual Mediator. There is a great deal of difference betwixt Moses and Christ : as, 1, Moses only received

* Or, to speak more properly, a covenant of justice.

the law, and delivered it to the people ; but Christ our true Moses fulfilled it. 2. Moses broke the tables, to shew how we in our nature had broken the law ; but Christ our true Moses repairs it. 3. Moses had the law only written in tables of stone ; but Christ writes it in the tables of our hearts. 4. Moses was a mere man ; but Christ is God as well as man. 5. Moses was only a servant in God's house ; but Christ is a Son ; yea, Christ is Lord of his own house, the church. 6. Moses' mediation was of this use, to shew what was the true manner of worshipping God ; but he did not inspire power to follow it, he could not reconcile men to God as of himself ; and therefore it appeared that there was need of another reconciler, viz. the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. What do we find of Christ, and of his death, in this manifestation of the covenant? I answer, (1,) In delivering the law, we find something of Christ. Some of the learned are of opinion, that Christ the Son of God did, in the shape of a man, deliver the law.

(2.) In the law itself, as it is a covenant of grace, we find something of Christ : in the preface he proclaims himself to be our God ; and in the first commandment we are bound to take this God to be our God : and in the second, he gives us a double motive to obey ; “ For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, I shew mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.” And in the fifth commandment he gives a promise of long life in Canaan, which is either to be looked at as a type of heaven ; or literally, for a prosperous condition here on earth ; but howsoever it is by virtue of the covenant, and as a testimony of God's love. Now, all these promises are made in Christ. God is not our God but in and through Jesus Christ. God will not shew mercy unto thousands, nor unto one of all the thousands of his saints, but as they are in Jesus Christ. God will not give us long life here, or eternity hereafter, but in, for, and through the Lord Jesus Christ. What if Moses

wrote not down the word Christ, yet certainly Moses wrote of Christ ; his words imply Christ, as Christ himself told the Jews, “ Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me ; for Moses wrote of me.” Surely Christ was, if not the only subject, yet the only scope of all the writings of Moses ; and therefore in the law itself you see we find something of Christ.

(3.) In the exposition of the law, as Moses gives it here and there, we find something of Christ. Yea, if we observe it, Moses brought something more to the expression of Christ, and of the covenant of grace, than ever was before. In the first promise it was revealed that Christ should be the seed of the woman. In the second manifestation of the promise, it was revealed that Christ should be of the seed of Abraham ; but in Moses’ writings, and Moses’ time, we learn more expressly that Christ was to be incarnate, and to have his conversation amongst men. The promise runs thus : “ And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell amongst them ; I am the Lord their God.” Again, Moses writing of Christ, “ The Lord thy God, (saith he,) will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken.” Was not this a plain expression ? Peter, in his sermon to the Jews, preached Jesus Christ ; and he tells the Jews, that this Jesus Christ was preached unto them before. When before ? Even in Moses’ time ; and for proof he cites this very text, “ For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you.”

(4.) In the confirmation of the law we find something of Christ. It was confirmed by seals and sacrifices. What were all these but a type of Christ ? In the former expression of the covenant we found the seal of circum-

cision, but now it pleased God to add unto the former another seal for confirmation of their faith, namely, the passover. And was not this a type of Christ, the immaculate Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world? Again, in this manifestation Moses brought in the priesthood as a settled ordinance to offer sacrifices for the people. And was not this a type of Christ, our true and unchangeable High-priest? No question the death and resurrection of Christ, the priesthood and kingdom of Christ, were prefigured by the sacrifices, the brazen serpent, the priesthood of Aaron, and the kingdom of Israel. And I cannot but think that the godly, spiritual Jews understood this very well; and that these did not rest in sacrifices or sacraments, but that by faith they did really enjoy Christ in them.

(5.) In the intention of God's giving the law we find something of Christ. The very end of God in promulgating the law, was, that upon the sense of our inability to keep it, and of our danger from breaking it, we should desire earnestly, and seek out diligently for Jesus Christ. To this purpose saith the apostle, "The law is our school-master, to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." A school-master, you know, doth not only correct, but also teach: so the law doth not only curse if the work be not done, but it shews where power and help is to be had, that is, from the Lord Jesus Christ. If this be so, how much to blame are they, that under pretence, of free grace and Christ, cry down the law. Rather let us cry it up, and this is the way to set up free grace and Christ. Surely, he that discovers his defects by the perfect rule of the law, and whose soul is humbled because of those defects, must needs prize Christ, desire Christ, advance Christ in his thoughts above all the men in the world.

And thus far of the covenant of promise, as it was manifested from Moses to David.

SECT. V. *Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to David.*

The next discovery of this gracious covenant was to David; and in this manifestation appears yet more of Christ. The expression of it is chiefly in these words, “Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.” For the right understanding of this, we shall examine these particulars.—1. Who is the author of this covenant? 2. To whom is the covenant made? 3. What is this, that the covenant is said to be made? 4. How is the covenant ordered? 5. Wherein is the covenant sure? 6. Whether is Christ more clearly manifested in this breaking forth of the covenant, than in any of the former?

1. Who is the author of this covenant? David says, He hath made it: he, i. e. God; the Rock of Israel, the everlasting Rock; “The Rock of their Salvation,” Psalm xviii. 2. “The Rock of their Refuge,” Psalm xciv. 22. “Their Rock and their Redeemer,” Psalm xix. 14. The Psalmist is frequent in this style, to shew that God is the mighty, stable, and immutable defence of all the faithful, who flee unto him, and will trust in him. He is such a rock as will not fail his creatures. Man is unstable, but he is God, and not man, who is the author of this covenant.

2. With whom is the covenant made? Why, saith David, “He hath made with me an everlasting covenant;” i. e. either with Christ the antitype, or else with David himself, the type of Christ. Some are wholly for a covenant betwixt God and Christ, and they deny any such thing as a covenant betwixt God and man; but are not the testimonies express? “Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant which the Lord hath made with you.” And, “I will make a new covenant with the house of

Israel, and with the house of Judah." Oh! take heed of such doctrines as tend to licentiousness! The covenant God makes with us binds us faster to God. And if there be no covenant betwixt God and us, it opens a gap to the looseness of our spirits; for how should we be charged with unfaithfulness unto God, if we have not all entered into a covenant with God.

3. What is this that the covenant is said *to be made*? This exhibits to us the freeness of God's entering into covenant with us. When God makes a covenant, then he gives grace unto all that he takes into covenant with him. "The Lord set his love upon you," (said Moses to Israel,) "to take you into covenant with him; not because ye were more in number than other people, but because he loved you, and chose your fathers."

4. How is the covenant said to be *ordered*? The word ordered sets out to us a marshalling and fit laying of things together, in opposition to disorder and confusion. As we see in an army, every one is set in rank and file; so every thing in this covenant is so ranked, disposed, and ordered, that it stands at best advantage to receive and repel the enemy. (1.) It is well ordered in respect of the root out of which it grew. This was the infinite wisdom and mercy of God. 1. It was founded in wisdom. The covenant of grace was a result of counsel; it was no rash act, but a deliberate act with infinite wisdom. God being the Sovereign of all his creatures, and seeing mankind in a perishing condition, determined within himself deliberately to make such a covenant of peace. 2. It was founded in mercy; (*i. e.*) in the goodness of God flowing out to those in misery. (2.) It is well ordered in respect of the method. First, God begins, then we come on. First, God, on his part, gives grace, and then we, on our parts, act faith and obedience. God hath ever the first work; as, first, "I will be your God, and then ye shall be my people." First, "I will take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh;" and then "you shall loathe yourselves for your iniquities and for your abomina-

tions ;" first, "I will sprinkle water upon you," and then "ye shall be clean from all your filthiness ;" first, "I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my statutes ;" and then "ye shall keep my judgments and do them ;" first, "I will pour out my Spirit of grace and supplication upon you," and then "you shall mourn as a man mourning for his only son :" first, I will do all, and then ye shall do something. A troubled spirit is apt to cry out, "Alas ! I can do nothing ; I can as well dissolve a rock, as make my heart of stone a heart of flesh !" Mark how the covenant stands well ordered, like an army : I will do all, saith God, and then thou shalt do something : I will strengthen and quicken you, and then ye shall serve me, saith the Lord. (3.) It is well ordered in respect of the end and aim, to which all the parts of the covenant are referred. The end of the covenant is, "the praise of the glory of his grace." The parts of the covenant are the promise and the stipulation ; the promises are either principal, and that is God and Christ, or secondary, and that is, justification, sanctification, and glorification : and the stipulation on our parts, are faith and obedience ; we must believe in him that justifies the ungodly, and walk before him in all well-pleasing. Observe now the main design of the covenant, and see but how all the streams run towards that ocean : God gives himself "to the praise of the glory of his grace." God gives Christ, pardon, sanctification, and salvation ; and we believe, we obey, "to the praise of the glory of his grace ;" and good reason, for all is of grace, and therefore all must tend "to the praise of the glory of his grace." It is of grace that God hath given himself, Christ, pardon, sanctification, and salvation to any soul. It is of grace that we believe : "By grace are ye saved through faith, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Oh ! the sweet and comely order of this covenant ! All is of grace, and all tends "to the praise and glory of it," and therefore it is called a *covenant of grace*. Many a soul is forced to cry, I cannot believe ; I may as well reach heaven with

a finger, as lay hold on Christ by the hand of faith ; but mark how the covenant stands, like a well marshalled army, to repel this doubt. If thou canst not believe, God will enable thee to believe. "To you it is given to believe." God will not only promise good things, but helps us by his Spirit to perform the conditions. He disposes our hearts to believe in God, and to believe in Christ. All is of grace, that all may tend "to the praise of the glory of his grace."

5. Wherein is the covenant sure ? I answer, It is sure in the performance and accomplishment of it. Hence the promises of the covenant are called, "The sure mercies of David ;" not because they were sure unto David alone, but because they are sure unto all the seed of David that are in covenant with God, as David was. The promises of God's covenant are not "yea and nay," various and uncertain, but they are "yea and amen," sure to be fulfilled. Hence the stability of God's covenant is compared to the firmness and unmoveableness of the mighty mountains ; nay, "mountains may depart, and the hills be removed by a miracle, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." Sooner shall the rocks be removed, the fire cease to burn, the sun be turned into darkness, and the very heavens be confounded with the earth, than the promise of God shall fail.

6. Christ is more clearly manifested in this breaking forth of the covenant, than in any of the former : for here we see, (1.) That he was God and man in one person : David's son, and yet David's Lord. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (2.) That he suffered for us ; and in his sufferings how many particulars are discovered ! As, first, his cry, "My God ! my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ?" Secondly, the Jews' taunts : "He trusted on the Lord, that he would deliver him ; let him deliver

him if he delight in him.” Thirdly, the very manner of his death ; “They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones : they look and stare upon me : they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” (3.) That he rose again for us. “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” (4.) That he ascended up into heaven ; “Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive ; thou hast received gifts for men.” (5.) That he must be King over us, and over his enemies. “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion ; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.”

(6.) That he must be Priest, as well as King, and Sacrifice as well as Priest. “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech :”—“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness ; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows :” (*i. e.* above all Christians who are thy fellows, consorts, and partners in the anointing : “Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldest not have ; but mine ear hast thou bored ; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come : in the volume of the book it is written of me, That I should do thy will, O God.” Mine ears hast thou bored, or digged open. The Septuagint, to make the sense plainer, say, “But a body hast thou fitted me, or prepared for me.” Meaning, that his body was ordained and fitted to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world, when other legal sacrifices were received as unprofitable. See how clearly Christ is revealed. It never was thus before.

And thus far of the covenant of promise, as it was manifested from David till the captivity.

SECT. VI. *Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to Israel about the Time of the Captivity.*

THE great breaking forth of this gracious covenant was to Israel about the time of their captivity. By reason of that captivity of Babylon, Israel was almost clean destroyed ; and therefore then it was high time that the Lord should appear like a sun after a stormy rain, and give them some clearer light of Christ. He doth so, especially in these words, “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah ; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt ; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel : After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people ; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord ; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.” In this expression of the covenant, we shall examine these particulars :—

1. Why it is called a *new covenant*. 2. Wherein the expression of this covenant doth excel the former, which God made with their fathers ? 3. How doth God put the law into our inward parts ? 4. What is it to have the law written in our hearts ? 5. How are we taught of God, so as not to need (comparatively) any other kind of teaching ? 6. What is the universality of this knowledge, in that “all shall know me, saith the Lord ?”

1. Why is it called a new covenant ? I answer, It is called new, in contradistinction from the covenant of promise before Christ came. The very same words are

repeated in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.—In that he saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away." The new covenant is usually understood in the latter sense; it is new, because diverse from that which God made with the fathers before Christ; it hath a new worship, new adoration, a new form of the church, new witnesses, new tables, new ordinances; and these never to be disannulled, never to wax old, as the apostle speaks.

2. Wherein doth this covenant excel the former, which God made with their fathers? I answer:—(1.) It excels in the benefits and graces of the Spirit. We find, that, under this covenant, they were more plentifully bestowed upon the church than formerly. (2.) It excels in the discovery of the Mediator, in and through whom this covenant was made. In the former expressions, we discovered much, yet in none of them was so plainly revealed the time of his coming, the place of his birth, his name, the circumstances of his nativity, his humiliation, and kingdom, as we find in this.—[1.] Concerning the time of his coming. "Seventy weeks shall be determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy," Dan. xi. 24. [2.] Concerning the place of his birth. "But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," Mic. v. 2. [3.] Concerning his name. "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."—"In his days Judah

shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely ; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness.*—“Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and thou, O virgin, shalt call his name Immanuel,” Isa. ix. 6, vii. 14; Jer. xxiii. 5. [4.] Concerning the circumstances of his nativity. That he should be born of a virgin: that at his birth all the infants round about Bethlehem should be slain, Jer. xxxi. 15. That John the Baptist should be his forerunner, to prepare his way, Mal. iii. 1. That he should flee into Egypt, and be recalled thence again, Hosea xi. 1. I might add many particulars of this kind. [5.] Concerning his humiliation. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows ; yet we did esteem him smitten of God, and afflicted ; but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes were we healed. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison, and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation ? He was cut off out of the land of the living ; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death ; and he was numbered with the transgressors ; and he bare the sin of many ; and made intercession for the transgressors.” One would think this were rather a history than a prophecy of Christ’s sufferings. [6.] Concerning his kingdom. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold thy king cometh unto thee : he is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass,” Zech. ix. 9, 10. Behold a King, behold thy King cometh, and he comes unto thee. 1. He is a King, and therefore able. 2. He is *thy* King, and therefore willing to save. Wonderful love, that he would come ! but more wonderful was the manner of his coming : he that before made man

a soul after the image of God, then made himself a body after the image of man. And thus we see how this covenant excels the former in every one of these respects.

3. How doth God put the law into our inward parts ? I answer, God puts the law into our inward parts, by enlivening us with the graces of his Holy Spirit, suitable to his commandment. First, there is the law of God without us, as we see it or read it in the Scriptures ; but when it is put within us, then God hath wrought an inward disposition in our minds that answers to that law without us. For example, this is the law without, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." To answer which there is a promise, "I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Now, when this promise is fulfilled, when God hath put love in our hearts, then is the law put into our inward parts.

4. What is it to have the *law written in our hearts* ? This writing contains the former, and is something more. It is said to be written, that there might be something within answerable to the law without ; it was written without, and so it was written within. This writing is the very same with copying or transcribing. The writing within is every way answerable to the writing without. Oh ! what a mercy is this, that the same God who wrote the law with his own finger on the tables of stone, should also write the same law with the finger of his Spirit in the tables of our hearts ! As you see in a seal, when you have put the seal on the wax, and you take it off again, you find in the wax the same impression that was on the seal ; so it is in the hearts of the faithful ; when the Spirit hath once softened them, then he writes the law ; *i. e.* he stamps an inward aptness, an inward disposition on the heart, answering to every particular of the law.

5. How are we taught of God, so as not to need (comparatively,) any other kind of teaching ? I answer, (1.) God teacheth inwardly. "In the hidden part thou

hast made me know wisdom," saith David; and again, "I thank the Lord that gave me counsel, my reins also instruct me in the night-season." The reins are the most inward part of the body, and the night-season the most private time; both express the intimacy of Divine teaching. "God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts." Man's light may shine into the head, but God's light alone doth shine into the heart. (2.) God teacheth clearly. Elihu offering himself instead of God to reason with Job, he tells him, "My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly." If ever the word come home to an heart, it comes with a convincing clearness. So the apostle, "Our gospel came unto you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The word hath a treble emphasis, assurance, full assurance, and much full assurance: here is clear work. (3.) God teacheth sweetly and comfortably. "Thou hast taught me," saith David, and then it follows, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste? Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." Luther said, "He would not live in paradise if he must live without the Word; but with the Word, (said he,) I could live in hell." When Christ put his hand in by the hole of the door to teach the heart, "her bowels were moved, and then her fingers dropped upon the handles of the lock sweet-smelling myrrh," Cant. v 5. The teachings of Christ left such blessings upon the first motion of the spouse's heart, that with the very touch of them she is refreshed; her fingers drop myrrh, and her bowels are moved as the monuments of his gracious teachings. Christians, these are the teachings of God! and, in reference to these, "We shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." God's teaching is another kind of teaching than we can have from the hands of men; there is no man in the world can teach thus:

and therefore, they whom God teacheth, need not any other kind of teaching, respectively or comparatively.

6. What is the universality of this knowledge? "They shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord." The meaning is, that all that are in the covenant of grace shall be so taught of God, that they shall every one know God inwardly, clearly, experimentally, sweetly, and savingly.

I have now propounded the object we are to look unto; that is, Jesus, as held forth in a way of promise or covenant, in that dark time, from the creation till his first coming in the flesh: our next business is, to direct you in the mystery of grace, how you are to look to him in this respect.

CHAP II.

SECT. I. Of knowing Jesus, as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation, from the Creation until his first coming.

LOOKING comprehends knowing, considering, desiring, hoping, believing, loving, joying, calling on, conforming to, as you have heard; and accordingly that we may practise, 1. We must know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in the beginning, and from the beginning of the world. Come, let us learn what he did for us in the morning of this world. He made it for us, and he made us more especially for his own glory; but presently after we were made, we sinned and marred the image wherein God made us. This was the saddest act that ever was; it was the undoing of man, and (without the mercy of God,) the damning of all souls to all eternity. And, O my soul, know this for thyself, thou wast in the loins of Adam at that same time, so that what he did, thou didst; thou wast partaker of his sins, and thou wast to partake with him in his punishment. But

well mayest thou say, Blessed be God for Jesus Christ; at the very instant when all should have been damned, Christ intervened; a covenant of grace was made with man, and Christ is the foundation, in and through whom we must be reconciled unto God. Come, soul, and study this covenant of grace in reference to thyself. Had not this been, where hadst thou been? Nay, where had all the world been at this day? Surely it concerns thee to take notice of this great transaction. After man had fallen by sin, Christ is promised; and that all the saints might partake of Christ, a covenant of grace is introduced. This, at the beginning of the world, was more dim, but the nearer to Christ's coming in the flesh, the more clearly it appeared. Howsoever dimly or clearly, thus it pleased God in Christ to carry on the great work of our salvation at that time, viz. by a promise of Christ, and by a covenant in Christ. And for thy better knowledge of it, study the promise made to Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, and Israel. Study these several breakings out of the covenant of grace. It is worth thy pains; it is a mystery "which had been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to the saints." Here lies the firm foundation of a Christian's comforts; if thou canst but assure thyself of thy part in this, thou art blessed for ever. Oh! how satisfying is it to know the faithful engagements of the Almighty God, through that Son of his love, in a covenant of grace.

SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

We must consider Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in that dark time. It is not enough to study it and know it, but we must seriously meditate, ponder, and consider it, till we bring it to some profitable issue. This is the consideration I mean, that we hold our thoughts to this or that spiritual subject, till we perceive success, and the work prosper in our hands. Now, to help us in this,

I. Consider Jesus in the first promise made to man. “It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” When all men were under the guilt of sin, and in the power of satan; and when thou, my soul, wast in as bad a case as any other, then to hear the sound of these glad tidings, then to hear of Jesus, a Saviour, and Redeemer, sure this was welcome news. Come, draw the case nearer to thyself. Thou wast in Adam’s loins; suppose thou hadst been in Adam’s stead; suppose thou hadst “heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden;” suppose thou hadst heard him call, “Adam, where art thou?” Peter, Andrew, Thomas, where art thou? What? “Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?” Appear, and come to judgment; the law is irrevocable, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” There is nothing to be looked for but death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal. Oh! what a fearful condition is this, no sooner to come into the world, but presently to be turned over into hell! for one day to be a monarch of the world, and the very next to be a slave of satan, and bound hand and foot in a darksome dungeon! for a few hours to live in Eden, to enjoy every tree in the garden, “pleasant to the sight, and good for food,” and then to enter into the confines of eternity, and ever be tormented with the devil and his angels! It is no wonder that Adam sought to “hide himself from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.” O my soul, in that case thou wouldest have cried to the rocks and to the mountains, “Fall on me, and hide me from the face of him that sitteth on the throne.” If God be angry, who may abide it? When “the great day of his wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?” And yet despair not, O my soul; for in the midst of wrath God is pleased to remember mercy. Even now, when all the world should have been damned, Jesus is proclaimed and promised, and he it is that must die, according to the condemnation; for he is our surety, and he it is that by death

must overcome death and the devil. "It shall bruise thy head," saith God to satan; as if he had said, Come, satan, thou hast taken captive ten thousands of souls: Adam and Eve are now ensnared, and in their loins all the men and women that ever shall be. Now is thy day of triumph, but thou shalt not carry it thus. Out of the seed of the woman shall spring a Branch, "and he shall bruise thy head," he shall break thy power, he shall tread thy dominion under foot, he shall lead thy captivity captive, he shall take away sin, he shall point out to men and angels the glory of heaven, and a new world of free grace. In this promise, O my soul, is wrapped up thy hope, thy heaven, thy salvation; and therefore consider it, look on all sides of it, view it over and over; it is a field that contains in the bowels of it a precious treasure; there is in it a Saviour, a Redeemer, a Deliverer from sin, death, and hell.

2. Consider Jesus in that promise made to Abraham. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." In respect of this covenant, Abraham is called "the father of the faithful;" and they which are of the faith are called "the children of Abraham." And, O my soul! thou dost by faith draw it through Abraham, to whom this promise was made, for "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Consider what a mercy this is, that God should enter into a covenant with thee in the loins of Abraham. God made a promise of Christ, and inclusively a covenant of grace in his comforting Adam; but he makes a covenant expressly under the name of covenant, with Abraham and his seed. Be amazed! What? That the great and glorious God of heaven and earth should make himself a debtor to us? O my soul, think of it seriously: he is in heaven, and thou art on earth; he is the Creator, and thou art his creature. Ah! what art thou, or what is thy Father's house, that thou

shouldst be raised up hitherto ! The very covenant is a wonder, as it relates to God and us. What is it but a compact, a binding of God and us. When Jehoshaphat and Ahab were in covenant, see how Jehoshaphat expresseth himself, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses ;" and so it is betwixt God and us. If once he gives us the covenant, then his strength is our strength, his power is our power, his armies are our armies, his attributes are our attributes, we have an interest in all. There is an offensive and defensive league, as I may say, betwixt God and us; and if we put him in mind of it in all our straits, he cannot deny us. Thus runs the tenor of his covenant, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee." This is the general promise, that carries all other promises in its womb. Consider that it is God in Christ that is propounded to us in this phrase, "I will be a God to thee." Here is the greatest promise that ever was made. Christ, God, is more than grace, pardon, holiness, heaven ; as the husband is more excellent than the marriage-robe, bracelets, rings. The well and fountain of life is of more excellency than the streams. Christ Jesus is far above a created beatitude which issueth from him. O my soul, is not this worthy of thy inmost consideration ?

3. Consider Jesus in that promise made to Moses and the Israelites, "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Much hath been said to this promise ; but to contract it, consider in the promise the sufficiency and propriety. First, here is sufficiency. It is a promise of infinite worth, an hid treasure, a rich possession, an overflowing blessing, which none can rightly value ; it is no less than the great, and mighty, and infinite God. If we had a promise of an hundred worlds, or of ten heavens, this is more than all. Heaven indeed is beautiful, but God is more beautiful ; for he is the God of heaven : and hence it is that the saints in heaven are not satisfied without their God. It is a sweet expression of

Bernard, "As whatsoever we give unto thee, Lord, unless we give ourselves, cannot satisfy thee; so whatsoever thou givest unto us, Lord, unless thou givest thyself, it cannot satisfy us." And hence it is, that as God doth make the saints his portion, so God is the portion and inheritance of his saints. Consider the greatness, the goodness, the all-sufficiency of this promise, "I am the Lord thy God!" No question but Moses had many other rich promises from God, but he could not be satisfied without God himself: "If thy presence be not with us, carry us not hence." And no wonder; for without God all things are nothing; but in the want of all other things God himself is instead of all. It is God's sole prerogative to be an universal good. The things of this world can but help in this or that particular thing; as bread against hunger, drink against thirst, clothes against cold and nakedness, house against wind and weather, riches against poverty, physic against sickness; but God is an all-sufficient good: he is all in all both to the inner and outward man. Are we guilty of sin? There is mercy in God to pardon us. Are we full of infirmities? There is grace in God to heal us. Are we strong in corruptions? There is power in God to subdue them in us. Are we disquieted in conscience? There is that Spirit in God that is the Comforter, that can fill us with joy unspeakable and glorious. And for our outward man, all our welfare is laid up in God: he is the God of our life, Psal. xlii. 8; he is the strength of our life, Psal. xxvii. 1; he is a quickening Spirit, 1 Cor. xv. 45. Which, though it be in regard of the inner man, yet there it is spoken of the outward man, which the Lord shall quicken after death, and doth now keep alive by his mighty power; for "in him we live, and move, and have our being."

O my soul, that thou wouldest but meditate and consider this promise in all thy wants. When means fail, and the streams run no more, oh! that thou wouldest then go to the fountain, where the waters run sweeter, and more sure! For, as Joseph said to Pharaoh, "It is

not in me, God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." So may silver and gold, and such things say to thee, It is not in us ; God shall give enough out of himself. Have God, and have all : want God, and there is no content in the enjoyment of all. It was the apostle's case, "As having nothing, yet possessing all things." Surely he lived to God, and enjoyed God, and he was an all-sufficient good unto him. God may be enjoyed in any condition ; in the meanest, as well as the greatest ; in the poorest as well as the richest. God will go into a wilderness, into a prison with his people, and there he will make up all that they are cut short of. Thy discontents therefore arise not from the want of outward means, but from want of inward fellowship with God : and if thou dost not find a sufficiency, it is because thou dost not enjoy him, who is thy all-sufficient good. Oh! stir up faith, and consider the covenant ; think seriously on this promise, " I am God all-sufficient : I am the Lord thy God."

Here is the propriety of saints, " The Lord thy God." What is this, that God is thy God ? Heaven and earth, angels and men, may stand astonished at it. What ? that the great and mighty God, God almighty, and God all-sufficient, should be called thy God ! It is observable what the apostle speaks, " God is not ashamed to be called their God." Would not a prince be ashamed to take a beggar, a base and adulterous woman, to be his wife ? But we are worse than so, and God is better than so. Sin hath made us worse than the worst of women, and God is better, holier, higher than the best of princes. And yet God is not ashamed to own us, nor ashamed that we should own him as our own, " I am thy God. It is as if the Lord should say, use me, and all my power, grace, mercy, kindness, as thine own. Go through all my attributes ; consider my almighty power, consider my wisdom, understanding, goodness, truth, faithfulness ; consider my faithfulness ; consider my patience, long-suffering, forbearance, all these are thine. As thus, my power is thine, to work all thy works for thee, and in thee, to

make a passage for thee in all thy straits, to deliver thee out of six troubles, and out of seven. My wisdom is thine, to counsel thee in any difficult cases, to instruct thee in things that be obscure, to reveal to thee the mysteries of grace, and the wonderful things contained in my law: my justice is thine, to deliver thee when thou art oppressed, to defend thee in thy innocence, and to vindicate thee from the injuries of men. What needs more? O my soul, think of these, and all other God's attributes: say in thyself, all these are mine. Nay more; think of God in Christ, (for otherwise what hast thou to do with God in a covenant of grace?) and say in thy heart, Jesus Christ is mine, my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Head, my elder Brother. His doings are mine, and his sufferings are mine; his life and his death, his resurrection and ascension, his session and intercession, all are mine. Nay, more; if Christ be mine, why then all good things are mine in Christ; I say, in Christ, for they come not immediately, but through the hands of a Redeemer, and though he be a man who redeemed us, yet because he is God as well as man, there is more of God, and heaven, and free love, in all our good things, than if we received them immediately from God. Ravens have their food, and devils have their being from God, by creature-right; but we have all we have from God in Christ by covenant-right. This surely, this very promise, is the principal promise of the covenant; it is the very substance, soul, and life of all. Oh then! how careful shouldst thou be to improve the strength of thy mind, thoughts, and affections, on this only subject?

4. Consider Jesus in that promise made to David, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." (1.) An everlasting covenant. Christ hath built and prepared a kingdom, that shall never fade; a spiritual and an heavenly kingdom, which shall never cease. And as he hath prepared it, so if thou believest, he hath entered into a covenant with thy soul to bestow it on thee; it is an everlasting covenant, and

he will give thee everlasting life. (2.) It is ordered in all things. The covenant of grace is so marshalled and ordered, that it stands at best advantage to receive and repel all thy objections. Many an objection hast thou raised: how often have such thoughts been in thee? "Oh! I am miserable, I shall not live, but die; my sins will damn me; I am lost for ever!" And again, "If God hath made with me a covenant, why then I have something to do on my part; (for this is the nature of the covenant, to bind on both parts,) but, alas! I have failed, I can do nothing; I can as well dissolve a rock, as make my heart of stone a heart of flesh: I can as well reach heaven with a finger, as lay hold on Christ by the hand of faith!" Have not such arguings as these been many a time in thy heart? Consider how the covenant is ordered in respect of the author of it, of the person's interest in it, of the parts of which it consists, and of the end and aim to which it refers: and in some of these, if not in all of these, thou wilt find thy objections answered. (3.) It is sure. God is not fast and loose in his covenant. Heaven and earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of his word shall fail. Consider, O my soul, he both can and will perform his word. His power, his love, his faithfulness, all stand engaged. What sweet matter is here for a soul to dwell upon? What needs it go out to other objects, whilst it may find enough here? But especially what needs it to bestow itself upon vain things? Oh! that so much precious sand of our thoughts should run out after sin, and so little after grace, or after this covenant of grace!

5. Consider Jesus in that promise which God made with Israel and Judah; "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no

more." Oh! what an error is it, that there is no inherent righteousness in the saints, but only in Christ! Is not this the ordinary Scripture-phrase? "I will put my Spirit within you;" and, "the water that I shall give you, shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" and, "the anointing which you have received of him, abideth in you;" and, "Christ in you the hope of glory." Observe how "the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels;" so that when the spirit went they went, and when the spirit was lifted up they were lifted up; even so is the Spirit of Christ, acting, guiding, framing, and disposing them to move and walk according to his laws. "The kingdom of heaven is within you," saith Christ. And, "I delight to do thy will, O God," saith David; "yea, thy law is within my heart." O my soul, if thou art in covenant with God, besides the indwelling of the Spirit, there is a spiritual principle of grace, which Christ by his Spirit hath put into thy heart, enabling thee to move thyself towards God. Oh! consider this inward principle, it is an excellent subject, worthy of thy consideration!

(1.) "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Consider God essentially and personally, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; God in himself, and God in his creatures. This very promise turns over heaven, earth, sea, land, bread, clothes, sleep, the world, life and death, into free-grace. No wonder that God set this promise in the midst of the covenant, as the heart in the midst of the body, to communicate life to all the rest. This promise hath an influence extending to all other promises; it is the great promise of the new covenant; it is as great as God is; though the heavens and heaven of heavens be not able to contain him, yet this promise contains him; God shuts up himself, as it were, in it. "I will be their God."

(2.) "They shall be my people," i. e. they shall be to me a peculiar people, Tit. ii. 14. The word *hath* this

emphasis in it, that God looks upon all other things as accidents in comparison, and his substance is his people ; they are his very portion. " For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." They are his treasure, his peculiar treasure, above all people. " If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me, and above all people ; for all the earth is mine." Observe, O my soul, " All the earth is mine," that is, all people are mine ; but I have a special interest in my covenanted people, they only are my portion, my peculiar treasure. The saints are those that God hath set his heart upon ; they are the children of the high God ; they are the spouse that are married to the Lamb ; they are nearer God in some respects than the very angels themselves, for the angels are not in a mystical union so married to Christ as God's people are. Oh ! the happiness of saints ! " I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

(3.) " They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord ; for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest, saith the Lord." Consider this, O poor soul ! Thou complainest of thy weakness, thou knowest little or nothing : why, see here a glorious promise ; if thou art but in covenant with God, thou shalt be taught of God, and then thou shalt know God far more clearly than the Jews of old ; he will open to thee all his treasures of wisdom and knowledge, he will bestow on thee a greater measure of his Spirit, so that " out of thy belly shall flow rivers of living water." We say, a good tutor may teach more in a day than another in a month. Now the promise runs thus, " All thy children shall be taught of God :" not that private instruction, or the publick ministry, must be excluded ; we know these are appointed under the New Testament, and are subordinate to the Spirit's teaching ; but that the teachings of God far surpass the teachings of men, and therefore the knowledge of God under the New Testament, shall far surpass that under

the Old. Herein appears the excellency of Christ's prophetical office, "He is such a prophet as enlightens every man within that comes into the world." He is such a prophet as baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. He is such a prophet as makes men's hearts to burn within them when he speaks unto them. He is such a prophet as bids his ministers, "Go, teach all nations, and I will be with you; and I will make you able ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit." He is such a prophet as teacheth inwardly, clearly, experimentally, and sweetly. No man in the world can say this, or do this, but Jesus Christ, the great prophet of the church, whom God hath raised up like unto Moses, yet far above Moses. Oh! my soul, consider if thou art thus taught of God!

(4.) "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." Consider of this! "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Consider, O my soul, suppose thy condition thus. As thou livest under the laws of men, so for the transgression of those laws thou art called to account. The judge weighs, and gives just judgment, he dooms thee to the axe, or rack, or wheel; and because of the aggravations of thy crime, he commands thee to be tortured leisurely, that bones, sinews, joints, might be pained for twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years; that so much of thy flesh should be cut off every day; that such and such a bone should be broken such and such a day; and that by art the flesh should be restored, and the bone cured again; that for so many years thou mightest be kept every day dying, and yet never die; that all this while thou must have no sleep, nor ease, nor food, nor clothing; that whips of iron, scourges of scorpions, that racks, wheels, caldrons full of melted lead should be prepared, instruments of thy continual torments. In this case, suppose a mighty prince, by an act of free and special grace should deliver thee from this pain and torture, and not only so, but should give thee a life in

perfect health, should put thee into a paradise of pleasures, where all the honour, love, and service of a world of men and angels should attend thee, and where thou shouldst be elevated to the top of all imaginable happiness, above Solomon in the highest royalty, or Adam in his first innocence ; were not this mercy ? Wouldst thou not think it the highest act of grace and love that any creature could extend to his fellow creature ? And yet all this is nothing but a shadow of grace in comparison of the love and rich grace of God in the justification of a sinner. If thou hast a right to this promise, " I will forgive thy iniquity, and I will remember thy sin no more," thou art delivered from eternal death, and thou art entitled to an eternal kingdom. Oh ! know thy blessedness aright ! Consider how infinitely thou art engaged to God, and Christ, and mercy, and free-grace ! This promise sounds forth nothing but grace and blessing ; grace from God, and blessing on us. It is grace, because nothing but grace and mercy can forgive ; it is grace, because God, if he will, hath power in his hand to revenge. He doth not pass by sin as men do offences, when they dissemble forgiveness ; they may forgive, because they have not power to avenge. It is otherwise with God : " To me belongs vengeance," saith God. He is able to destroy, and yet he chooseth to forgive. This is his name, Strong and Gracious.

O my soul, thou art apt to say, " Will the Lord forgive my sins ? What reason hath God to look on me, to pardon me, to pluck me as a fire-brand out of the fire of hell ? Why should God forgive me ?" But now consider, if thy heart be humbled, the Lord will do it. 1. Because he delighteth in mercy. It is a pleasure to God to forgive sins. Never did we take more pleasure, nor so much pleasure in committing sin, as he doth in pardoning sin. He is the Father of mercies ; he delights in mercy, as a father in his children ; it doth him good to see the fruits of his own mercy, in taking away the sins of his own people. 2. Because it is his nature and inclination

to pardon sin. This appears in the proclaiming of his name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." In his gracious invitations: Come unto me, saith Christ; if sin burden you, I will ease you; and in his patience, and waiting for repentance. He waits to this very end that he may be gracious, and that he may have mercy. 3. Because it is his promise to pardon sin. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins." This promise of pardon is one of the great blessings of the covenant of grace. You hear the words, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." Now come, consider, O my soul, every particular in this gracious covenant, and be serious in thy consideration! Surely there is too much expense of thy spirit upon vain, transitory, and worldly things. Alas! thou hast but a short time to live; and the strength of thy mind is the most precious thing thou hast. Oh, then! let thy inmost thoughts and deep affections be exercised on this subject. If God and Jesus, and all thy good be included here, why should not thy whole soul be intent on this? Why shouldst thou spend it on the creature? Why shouldst thou be so subject to carnal griefs and fears? Surely all thy powers are fitter to be fixed on God in Christ, on Jesus in a covenant of grace.

Sect. III. *Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

We must desire Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation, before his coming in the flesh. It is not enough to know and consider, but we must desire. This is the order of God's work. No sooner hath his Spirit clearly revealed the goodness of the promise that we come to know, but the soul considers it, views it in all its excellencies, weighs it in the balance of its best and deepest meditation. This done, the affections begin to

stir, and the soul begins thus to reason : “Oh ! happy I, that I see the goodness of this gracious promise ; but miserable I, if I come to see this, and never have a share in it ! Oh ! why not I, Lord ? Why may not my sins be pardoned, and my corruptions subdued ? Why should not the law be written in my heart, and put into my inward parts ? Why may not I say, ‘ My Lord and my God ? ’ Or, ‘ I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine ? ’ Why should not this covenant be established between God and me ? Now, my soul thirsts after this as a thirsty land, my affections hunger after Jesus. Oh ! I would fain be in covenant with God ; for ‘ this is all my salvation, and all my desire ! ’ 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.” Come then, my soul, and whet thy desires in each of these respects : as, 1. Desire thy interest in the covenant ; 2. Desire thy improvement of the covenant ; 3. Desire the continuance of thy covenant state ; 4. Desire Jesus the great business, or the All in All in a covenant of grace.

1. Desire thy interest in the covenant. Say in thyself, “ Is the Lord willing to receive me to his grace ? Was that his voice in the streets, ‘ How long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ? Turn ye at my reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you.’ Was that his proclamation, ‘ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, incline your ear and come unto me, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.’ And are these the promises offered in the covenant, ‘ I will put my law into your inward parts, and I will write it in your hearts, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.’ Oh ! the blessed condition of those people that are in covenant with God ! ‘ Blessed art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, a people saved of the Lord ! Happy is the people that are in such a such a case ; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.’ But ah ! what can I say ? No sin like unto my sin, no misery like unto my misery. Alas ! I die for hunger, whilst those that are in my Father’s house have bread enough. Oh ! that I were in

their condition ! Never did David long more for the waters of the well of Bethlehem than my soul, now touched with the sense of sin, doth desire to be at peace with God, and in covenant with him. Oh ! I thirst, I pant, I gasp after him, I long for communion and peace with him, with my soul do I desire thee in the night ; yea, with my spirit within me do I seek thee early."

2. Desire the improvement of the covenant : it may be, God hath given thee an interest in it. But alas ! thy hold is so weak that thou scarce knowest the meaning of it ; the Lord may answer, but yet he speaks darkly, as once he spake to the woman, " Go thy way and sin no more." It is a middle kind of expression, neither assuring her that her sin was pardoned, nor yet putting her out of hope that it might be pardoned. So it may be, God hath given thee some little ease, but he hath not spoken full peace. Go on, then, and desire more confirmation. Say in thine heart, " O Lord, thou hast begun to shew grace unto thy servant ; but oh ! manifest to me all thy goodness ; thou hast given me a drop, and I feel it so sweet that now I thirst, and long to enjoy the fountain ; thou hast given me a taste, but my desire is not thereby diminished, but enlarged ; and good reason, for what are these drops, and tastes, but only the first fruits and earnest of the Spirit ? Oh ! then, what are those harvests of joy ? What are those treasures of wisdom, and free grace, hid in God ? I have indeed beheld ' a feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, of wines on the lees well refined ; ' but oh ! what a famine is yet in my spirit ! O Lord, I have longed for thy salvation. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly !"

3. Desire continuance in the covenant state. Many a soul cannot deny that the Lord hath shewed mercy on him, but he fears that he shall not hold out. He feels within such a power of corruption, such strong temptations, that now he doubts, " Oh ! what will become of my poor soul ? What will be the issue of this ?" Come now, and desire perseverance. When Peter was ravished

on the Mount, "It is good being here," (says he,) "let us build three tabernacles." His desire was to have continued there for ever. O come with these pantings and breathings after God; put forth thy desires in these or the like expressions; "O Lord, thou hast said, I will betroth thee unto me for ever; then, Lord, I desire the accomplishment. Oh! fulfil what thou hast said! It would break my heart if ever the covenant should be broken betwixt me and thee. My desire is towards thee, and the more I enjoy thee, the more I desire and pant after thee. My desires are like thyself, infinite, eternal, everlasting desires."

4. Desire Jesus, the great business, or the All in All, in a covenant of grace. The most proper object of desire, especially to man fallen, is Jesus Christ. Hence it is that a poor sinner, under the sense of sin, cries out with the vehemency of desire, "Christ, and none but Christ; give me Christ, or I die, I am undone, I am lost for ever." But what is Christ, or Jesus, to a covenant of grace? I answer, He is the chief object, he is the All in All. (1.) Christ is the Messenger of this covenant. "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in." Christ travels with tidings between parties of the covenant. He reports of God to us, he commends his Father unto us. Ministers cannot speak of Christ, and of his Father, as he can do himself. O my soul, to excite thy desires, come, and hear Christ speak of Christ, and of his Father, and of heaven, for he saw all. And he reports of us to God; he commends us to his Father, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." Happy souls, of whom Christ is telling good tidings in heaven; for he is the angel of the covenant. (2.) He is the witness of the covenant; he saw and heard all. "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people;" and he is called "The faithful Witness; the Amen; the faithful and true Witness." The covenant saith, "The Son of Man came

to seek and to save that which was lost." Amen, saith Christ, I can witness that to be true. The covenant saith, Christ died, and rose again for sinners; Amen, saith Christ, "I was dead, and behold I live for evermore, Amen." There is not any thing said in the covenant but Christ is a witness to it; and therefore we read in the very end of the Bible, this subscription, as I may call it, in relation to Christ, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen." (3.) Christ is the surety of the covenant. "In as much as not without an oath he was made a priest, by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." The covenant of works had a promise; but because it would be broken, and done away, it had no oath of God, as this hath. O doubting soul, thou that sayest thy salvation is not sure, think on this Scripture; thou hast the oath of God for it; it is a sworn article of the covenant, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved." And to this end Christ is a surety, both for God and us. For God, he undertakes, that God shall fulfil his part of the covenant; "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And "him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." And he is a surety for us, in that he hath paid a ransom for us; and giveth a new heart to us. (4.) Christ is the Mediator of the covenant. The apostle calls him "Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant." He hath in his person the nature of God, being true God; and the nature of man, being very man: hence he is Mediator by office, and layeth his hands on both parties, as a days-man doth; and in this respect he is a friend, a reconciler, and a servant. 1. A Friend to both parties; he hath God's heart for man, to be gracious, and he hath man's heart for God, to satisfy justice. 2. A Reconciler of both parties; he brings down God to a treaty of peace, and he brings up man by a ransom paid; so that he may say unto both, "Father, come down to my brethren, my kindred and flesh; and thou, my sister and spouse, come up to my Father and thy Father, to my God and thy God." 3. He

is a Servant to both parties ; "Behold my Servant," (saith God,) "my righteous Servant." Yea, and our Servant, "He came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." (5.) Christ is the Testator of the covenant. He died to this very end, that he might confirm the covenant. "Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the Testator ; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the Testator liveth." Christ then must die, and Christ's blood must be shed, to seal the covenant of grace. It is not every blood, but Christ's blood that must seal the everlasting covenant, Heb. xiii. 20 ; and his blood being shed, he is then rightly called the Testator of the covenant.

Oh ! what fuel is here to set our desires on flame ! Come, soul, and bend thy desires towards Christ, as the sun-flower towards the sun, the iron to the loadstone ; yea, the nearer thou drawest towards Christ, the more do thou desire Christ. "He that thirsts let him thirst more, saith Bernard, and he that desires let him desire yet more abundantly." Is there not cause ? Oh ! what excellencies hast thou found in Christ ! Poor soul ! thou hast undone thyself by sin, there is but a step betwixt thee and damnation ; but to save thy soul, Christ comes leaping on the mountains, and skipping on the hills. He enters into a covenant with God ; he is the Messenger of the covenant, the Witness of the covenant, the Surety of the covenant, the Mediator of the covenant, the Testator of the covenant, the All in All. If David could say, "My soul breaks for the longing that it hath to thy judgments at all times ;" how mayest thou say, "My soul breaks for the longings that it hath to thy mercies, and my Jesus at all times." Oh ! I gasp for grace, as the thirsty land for drops of rain. I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long for an hearty draught of the "Fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Oh ! that I could see Jesus flying through the midst of heaven, with the covenant in his hand, Oh ! I long for that angel

of the covenant; I long to see such another vision as John did, when he said, " And I saw another angel in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon earth." What? Is that covenant in the hand of Christ? And is my name written in that roll? Say, " Lord, is my name written on the heart of Christ? Oh! if I had the glory of all the world; if I had ten thousand worlds, and ten thousand lives, I would lay them all down, to have this poor trembling soul of mine assured of this. Oh! my thirst is insatiable, my bowels are hot within me; my desire after Jesus is greedy as the grave, the coals thereof are as coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."

SECT. IV *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Hope is a certain confidence that the desired good will come. All the question is, Whether those promises contained in the covenant of grace belong unto me? And what are the grounds on which my hope is built? If the grounds be weak, then hope is doubtful, or presumptuous; but if the grounds be right, then hope is right, and I may cast anchor, and build upon it. In the disposition of these grounds, we shall only search into those qualifications which the Scripture tells us they are qualified with, with whom the Lord enters into a covenant of grace: and these we shall reduce, 1, To the condition of the covenant. 2. To the promise of the covenant.

1. If thou art in a covenant with God, then hath God wrought in thee that condition of the covenant, a true and lively faith. " Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." The promise of life contained in the covenant is made only to believers. This is so sure a way of trial, that the apostle himself directs us thereunto. " Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." But how shall I examine? Why thus: (1.) True faith will carry thee out of thyself into Christ, " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." A faithful man hath not his life in

himself, but in Christ Jesus ; he hath his spiritual being in the Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ ; he is joined to the Lord, and is one Spirit ; he seeth the Father in the Son, and the Son within himself, and also the Father within himself through the Son. " Know ye not that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates ? Ye shall know me, saith Christ, that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you." (2.) True faith will carry thee beyond the world. A believer looks on Christ overcoming the world in him : " This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (3.) True faith is ever accompanied with true love. If once by faith thou apprehendest Christ's love to thee, thou canst not but love Christ, who loved thec, and gave himself for thee. " We love him, because he first loved us." (4.) True faith purifies the heart, and purgeth out sin. When God discovers this, that he will heal backsliding, and love freely, and turn away his anger, then Ephraim shall say, " What have I any more to do with idols ?" If ever Christ reveal himself as the justification, he will be sure to present himself as the pattern of our sanctification. The knowledge of God's goodness will make us in love with holiness. (5.) Above all, observe the rise. True faith is ever bottomed upon the sense and pain of a lost condition. This is faith's method, " Be condemned to be saved ; be sick and be healed." Faith is a flower of Christ's own planting, but it grows in no soul but only on the margin of the lake of fire and brimstone ; in regard there is none so fit for Christ and heaven, as those who are self-sick, and self-condemned to hell. " They that be whole, need not a physician," saith Christ, " but they that are sick." I know satan argues thus, " Thou art not worthy of Christ, and therefore what hast thou to do with Christ ?" But faith concludes otherwise, " I am not worthy of Christ, I am out of measure sinful, I tremble at it, and I am sensible of it, and therefore ought I, and therefore must I come to Christ " This arguing is gospel-logick, and the right method of a true and saving faith.

For what is faith, but the act of a sinner humbled, weary, laden, poor, and self-condemned? Oh! take heed of their doctrine, who make faith the act of some vile person never humbled, but applying, with an immediate touch, his hot, boiling, and smoking lusts, to the bleeding, blessed wounds and death of Jesus Christ!

2. If thou art in covenant with God, then hath God fulfilled in some part the promises of this covenant to thy soul. (1.) Then hath God put the law into thy inward parts, and wrote in thy heart. Look, as face in the glass answers face, so does the conformity of thy heart to the law of God. Thou obeyest God's will, and delightest in that obedience; thou sayest with David, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (2.) Thou art by covenant as one of the people of God. Christ hath thy soul, thy body, thy affections; thou art Christ's by marriage, thou hast past over thyself unto him to be his spouse, his crown, his servant, his child for ever. Are these, O my soul, the grounds of thy hopes? a lively faith in Jesus? an accomplishment in some measure of the promises of the covenant? Why, these are the fuel of hope. If this be thy case, exercise thy hope strongly on Christ, and on the covenant of grace. O! hope in Jesus. Draw on thy hope yet more and more. Be not content only with an hope of expectation, but bring it on to an hope of confidence, or assurance; thou canst not fail, if thou hangest thy hope on Jesus.

SECT. V *Of believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

We must believe in Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation in a way of covenant. Consider, O my soul, to this end, these following passages.

1. Consider the gracious nature of God. That which undoes broken hearts, and trembling souls, is misconceptions of God. We have many times low thoughts of God's goodness, but we have large thoughts of his power and wrath. Now, to rectify these misapprehensions,

consider his name, and therein his nature, “ The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgressions, and sins.”

2. Consider the gracious nature of Jesus Christ. Our thoughts of God are necessarily more strange than of Jesus Christ, because of our infinite distance from the Godhead ; but in Christ, God is come down into our nature, and so infinite goodness and mercy is incarnate. Art thou afraid, O my soul, at this name Jah, and Jehovah? Oh ! remember his name is Emmanuel ; the lion is here disrobed of his garment of terror. See thy God disrobed of his terrible majesty ; see thy God is a man, and thy Judge is a brother. Oh ! that name, Jesus ! that name that sounds healing for every wound, settlement for every distraction, comfort for every sorrow. But here is the misery ; souls in distress had rather be poring on hell than heaven. O, my soul, how canst thou more contradict the nature of Christ, than to think him a destroyer of men ? But wherein appears the gracious nature of Christ ? I answer, (1,) In his being incarnate. How could Jesus have manifested more willingness to save, than that the Godhead should descend to assume our nature ? (2.) In his tender dealing with all sorts of sinners. He professed that he “ came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” He wept over Jerusalem, saying, “ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thee as an hen gathereth her chickens under her wings ? but ye would not.” And when his disciples would have had fire come down from heaven to consume those that refused him, he reproved them, and told them, they knew not of what spirit they were. (3.) In his care of his own ; not caring what he suffered, so they might be saved. Alas, alas ! that the Lord Jesus should pass through a life of misery, to a death more miserable, to manifest openly to the world the abundance of his love, and yet that my soul should suspect him of cruelty, or unwillingness to shew mercy !

Ah ! my soul, believe ; never cry out, My sins, my sins !
There is a gracious nature in Jesus Christ to pardon all.

3. Consider those tenders and offers of Christ, those entreaties and beseechings to accept of Christ, which are made in the gospel. What is the gospel ? or what is the sum of all the gospel, but this ? " O take Christ, and life in Christ, that thou mayest be saved." What mean these free offers ! " Ho every one that thirsteth come to the waters, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely ;" and " God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God is the first Suitor and Solicitor ; he first prays the soul to take Christ. Hark, at the door ! Who is it that knocks there ? Who is it that calls now, even now ? " Open unto me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled ; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night ?" See him through the windows. This can be none but Christ. His sweet language of " Sister, love, and dove," bespeaks him Christ ; his suffering language, that " his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night," bespeak him Christ. But hearken the motion he makes to thy soul : " Soul ! consider what price I have given to save thee. This my body was crucified, my hands and feet nailed, my heart pierced, and through anguish I was forced to cry, My soul is heavy, heavy unto death, and now what remains for thee but only to believe ? See all things ready on my part, justification, sanctification, salvation. I will be thy God, and thou shalt be of the number of my people. I offer now myself, and merits and benefits flowing therefrom, and I entreat thee to accept this offer. Oh ! take Christ, and life, and salvation in Christ. What, is this the voice of my Beloved ? Are these the entreaties of Jesus ? and, O my soul, wilt thou not believe ? Wilt thou not accept of this gracious offer of Christ ? Oh ! consider who it is that proclaimeth, inviteth, beseecheth.

If a poor man should offer thee mountains of gold, thou mightest doubt of performance, because he is not of that power. If a covetous rich man should offer thee thousands of silver, thou mightest doubt of performance, because it is contrary to his nature ; but Christ is neither poor, nor covetous ; as he is able, so his name is gracious, and his nature is to be faithful in performance, his covenant is sealed with his blood, and confirmed by his oath, that all shall have pardon that will but come in, and believe. Oh ! then let these words of Christ, whose lips are dropping down myrrh, prevail with thy soul. Say Amen to his offer, "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief."

4. Consider those commands of Christ, which, notwithstanding all thy excuses and pretences, he fastens on thee to believe. "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." Surely this command should entirely outweigh all countermands of flesh and blood, of satan, nature, reason, sense, and all the world. Why, this command is thy very ground and warrant, against which the very gates of hell can never prevail. When Abraham had a command to kill his only son, with his own hand, though it was matter of as great grief as could possibly pierce his heart, yet he would readily submit to it ; how much more shouldst thou obey when God commands no more, but that thou shouldst believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ ? There is no evil in this command ; no, it comprehends in it all good imaginable. Have Christ, and thou hast with him the excellency and variety of all blessings both of heaven and earth ; have Christ, and thou hast with him a discharge of all those endless and easeless torments of hell ; have Christ, and thou hast with him the glorious Deity itself, to be enjoyed through him to all eternity. Oh ! then believe in Jesus ! Suffer not the devil's cavils, and the groundless exceptions of thine own heart to prevail with thee against the direct commands of Almighty God.

5. Consider the messages of Christ, which he daily sends

by the hands of his gospel-ministers. "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." What a wonder is here ! Would not an earthly prince disdain to send to his rebellious slaves for reconciliation ? It is otherwise with Christ ; he is content to put up at our hands all indignities and affronts ; he is glad to sue to us first, and to send his ambassadors day after day, beseeching us to be reconciled unto him. O incomprehensible depth of unspeakable mercy and encouragement to come to Christ ! Wilt thou take Christ for thy bridegroom, and forsake all others ? This is the message which God hath bid me to deliver to thee. The Lord Jesus expects an answer from thee ; and I should be glad to return a fit answer to him that sent me. Say, then, wilt thou have Christ for thy husband ? Wilt thou enter into covenant with him ? Wilt thou surrender up thy soul to thy God ? Wilt thou rely on Christ, and apply Christ's merits particularly to thyself ? Wilt thou believe ? for that is it I mean by taking, receiving, and marrying of Christ. O happy if I could but join Christ and thy soul together this day ! O happy thou, if thou wouldest this day be persuaded by a poor ambassador of Christ ! Blame me not, if I am an importunate messenger. If ever I hear from thee, let me hear some good news, that I may return it to heaven, and give God the glory. Come, say on ; art thou willing to have Christ ? Wouldest thou have thy name enrolled in the covenant of grace ? Shall God be thy God, and Christ thy Christ ? Wilt thou have the person of Christ, and all those privileges flowing from the blood of Christ ? Sure thou art willing, art thou not ? Stay, then ; thou must take Christ on these terms ; thou must believe on him ; thou must take him as thy Saviour and Lord ; thou must take him, and forsake all others for him. This is the true faith, the condition of the covenant. Oh ! believe in Jesus, and the covenant is established, and all doubts removed.

SECT. VI. *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

We must love Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation. Go on, then, O my soul, put fire to the hearth, blow thy little spark, set before thee God's love, and thou canst not but love. In God's love consider, 1. The time ; 2. The properties ; 3. The effects of it.

1. For the time. (1.) He loved thee before the world was made. Hast thou not heard ? and wilt thou ever forget it ? Were not those ancient loves from all eternity ? (2.) He loved thee in the very beginning of the world. Was not the promise expressed to Adam intended for thee ? As thou sinnedst in his loins, so didst thou in his loins receive the promise, " It shall bruise thy head." And not long after, when God established his covenant with Abraham and his seed, wast thou not one of that seed of Abraham ? (3.) He loves thee now more especially, not only with a love of benevolence, as before, but with a love of complacency. Not only hath he struck covenant with Christ, with Adam, with Abraham, in thy behalf, but particularly and personally with thyself. And Oh ! what love is this. If a woman, lately conceiving, love her future fruit ; how much more doth she love it when it is born and embraced in her arms ? So if God loved thee before thou hadst a being ; yea, before the world, or any creature in it, had a being, how much more now ? Oh ! the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of this immeasurable love ! O, my soul, I cannot express the love of God in Christ to thee. I do but draw the picture of the sun with a coal, when I endeavour to express God's love in Christ.

2. For the properties of this love. (1.) God's love to thee is a free love. " I will love them freely," saith God. And " the Lord did not set his love upon you, and choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, but because the Lord loved you." There can be no other reason why the Lord loved thee, but because he loved thee. (2.) God's love to thee is the love of all relations.

Look what a friend's love is to a friend, or what a father's love is towards a child, or what an husband's love is towards a wife, such is God's love to thee ; thou art his friend, his son, his daughter, his spouse ; and God is thy All in All.

3. For the effects of his love. God so loves thee, as that he hath entered into a covenant with thee. Oh ! what a love is this. Tell me, O my soul, is there not an infinite disparity betwixt God and thee ? He is God above, and thou art a worm below : " He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy," and thou art less than the least of all the mercies of God. O wonder at such a condescension ! that such a Potter, and such a Former of things, should come on terms of bargaining with such clay as is guilty before him ! Had we the tongues of men and angels, we could never express it. God so loves thee, as that in the covenant he gives thee all his promises. Indeed, what is the covenant but an heap of promises ? As a cluster of stars makes a constellation ; so a mass of promises concurrereth in the covenant of grace. Wherever Christ is, clusters of Divine promises grow out of him ; as the rays and beams are from the sun. As God hath given thee his Son, so he hath given thee himself ; and in that God hath given thee his Son and himself, this is a greater degree of love. Christians ! stand amazed. Oh ! what love is this to the children of men ! Oh ! that we should live to have our ears filled with this sound from heaven ! " I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee ; I am the Lord thy God. I will be their God, and they shall be my people." O, my soul, where hast thou been ? Rouse up, and set before thee all these instances of God's love in Christ. Are not these strong attractives to gain thy love ? Canst thou choose to love the Lord thy God ? Shall not all this love of God in Christ to thee constrain thy love ? God in Christ is the very element of love. Every element will go to its proper place. Now, God is love, and whither should thy love be carried but to this ocean or sea of love ?

“ Come, my Beloved,” (said the spouse to Christ,) “ let us go up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vines flourish, whether the tender grapes appear; there will I give thee my loves.” The flourishing of the vine, and the appearing of the tender grapes, are the fruits of the graces of God in the assemblies of his saints. When thou comest to the word, prayer, meditation, be sure of this, to give Christ thy love.

SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

1. We must joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation. I know our joy here is but in part; such is the excellency of spiritual joy, that it is reserved for heaven. God will not permit it to be pure and perfect here below; and yet such as it is, though mingled with cares and pains, it is a blessed duty; it is the light of our souls; and were it quite taken away, our lives would be nothing but horror and confusion.

O my soul, exercise this joy. Is there not cause? Come, see, and own thy blessedness. Take notice of the great things the Lord hath done for thee. (1.) He hath made a covenant with thee of temporal mercies. Thou hast all thou hast by freeholding of covenant-grace. Thy bread is by covenant, thy sleep is by covenant, thy safety from the sword is by the covenant; the very tilling of thy land is by a covenant of grace, Ezek. xxxvi. 34. O how sweet is this? Every crumb is from Christ, and by virtue of a covenant of grace. (2.) He hath made a covenant with thee of spiritual mercies; even a covenant of peace, and grace, and blessing, and life for evermore. God is become thy God, he is all things to thee; he hath forgiven thy sins, he hath given thee his Spirit to lead thee, to sanctify thee, to uphold thee in that state wherein thou standest; and at last he will bring thee to a full enjoyment of himself in glory. Oh! lift up thy head, strengthen the weak hands and the feeble knees;

serve the Lord with gladness, considering the day of thy salvation draweth nigh. Write it in letters of gold, that “thy God is in covenant with thee, to love thee, to bless thee, and to save thee. Yet a little while and he that shall come will come,” and receive thee to himself, and then thou shalt fully know what it is to have God to be thy God. If a man in covenant with God looks on him, he saith, This is my Father; if on Christ, This is my elder Brother; if on angels, These are my keepers; if on heaven, This is my house; if on the signs of heaven, fire, meteors, thunder, These are but the effects of my Father’s power; if on prosperity, God hath yet better things for me in store; if on adversity, Jesus Christ hath suffered much more for me than this; if on the devil, death, and hell, “O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?”

Come, poor soul, is it not thus with thee? What? Art thou in covenant with God, or art thou not? If yet thou doubtest, review thy grounds of hope, and stop not there till thou comest up to assurance. But if thou art persuaded of thy interest, oh! then rejoice therein. Is it not a gospel duty, to “rejoice in the Lord, and again to rejoice?” The Lord is delighted in thy delights: he would fain have it thy constant frame, and daily business, to live in joy, and to be always delighting thyself in him. “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” saith David, “and all that is within me bless his holy name.” So rejoice in the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, rejoice in the name of God. This is true joy, when the soul unites itself to the good possessed in all its parts. And was there ever such an object of true joy as this? Hearken, as if heaven opened, and the voice came from God in heaven, “I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. I am the Lord thy God, and I will be thy God.” What? Doth not thine heart leap in thy bosom at the sound? John the Baptist leaped in his mother’s womb for joy, at the sound of Mary’s voice; and doth not thy soul spring within thee at this

voice of God? O, wonder! Some can delight themselves in sin; and is not God better than sin? If there be in thee any rejoicing faculty, now awake, and stir it up. It is *the Lord thy God* whom thou art to rejoice in; it is he who is the top of heaven's joy, their exceeding joy; and it is he who is thy God, as well as their God. Enough! enough! or if this be not enough, hear thy duty, as the Lord commands thee: "Rejoice in the Lord," Phil. iii. 1. "Be glad, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God, Joel ii. 23. Rejoice in the Lord, all ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright," Psal. xxxiii. 1. "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness," Psal. xcvi. 12. "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice, let them shout for joy, because thou defendest them; let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee," Psal. v. 11.

SECT. VIII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

We must call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus, in reference to this gracious covenant.

Now this calling on God contains prayer and praise.

1. We must pray. We must use arguments of faith, challenging God, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." Why? "For thou art the Lord my God." This covenant is the ground on which all prayers must be bottomed. The covenant, we know, contains all the promises; and what is prayer but promises turned into petitions? Thus prayed the prophet Jeremiah, "Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory. Remember, break not thy covenant with us." Why? "Art not thou the Lord our God?" And thus prayed the prophet Isaiah, "Be not wroth very sore, neither remember iniquity for ever. Behold, we beseech thee!" And why so? "We are thy people!" If thy soul be in trouble for sin and corruption, yet go to God,

and plead his promise and covenant: say as Jehoshaphat, "Lord, 'I know not what to do, only mine eyes are unto thee; oh! do thou subduc mine iniquities.'" If thy soul be troubled for want of strength to do this or that duty; yet go to God and Christ, and say, "Lord, thou knowest I have no strength in myself; I am a barren wilderness; but thou hast entered into a covenant with me, that thou wilt put thy law into my inward parts, thou wilt cause me to keep thy judgments, and do them," Ezek. xxxvi. 27. This is the way; in every want, or strait, or necessity, fly to God and Christ, saying, "Thou art our Father, and we are thy people, O break not thy covenant with us."

2. We must praise. (1.) If we would have the blessing, let us seek it with a purpose to have grace exalted: Thus Moses sought pardon to this very end, that God's mercy might appear: "If thou wilt pardon their sin, thy mercy shall appear, and we shall be thankful unto thee for it;" so the words are made out by expositors, which in the text are not (either passionately or modestly,) fully expressed. These are prevailing requests with God, when we plead for the glorifying of his own grace. "Father, glorify thy name," said Christ; and presently there comes a voice out of the cloud, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." (2.) If we have the blessing already, then we must be sure to ascribe glory unto him, that hath made good his promise unto us. "Who is a God like unto thee, who passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of thy heritage?" Who shall make the praise of his grace to ring through the world, that heaven and earth may wonder at the grace that hath been shewed us. "I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses?" See how the prophet mentions the kindnesses, the loving kindnesses, the multitude of the loving kindnesses, the goodness, and the great goodness of God; he could hardly

leave off. He would have God and grace to have all the glory. Oh ! my soul, hath God entered thee into a covenant of grace ? Why, then, “ bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name !”

SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

We must conform to Jesus, in reference to this covenant of grace. “ We are changed by beholding, into the same image.” If we look unto Jesus in this respect, this look will have such an influence upon us, that we shall conform to Jesus. But wherein consists this conformity ? I answer, in these particulars :

1. God in Christ offers a covenant of grace to us : so we, through Christ, should embrace this gracious offer. His offers appeared, 1. To Adam. 2. To Abraham. 3. To Moses. 4. To David. 5. To Israel and to Judah. Take notice of it in that great promise of the covenant, “ I will be thy God.” So God is first with us ; he is the first mover, he begins with us before we begin with him. “ I will bring them,” saith God, “ into the bond of the covenant.” Now in this let us conform. Doth he offer ? Let us embrace the offer. Doth he lead the way ? Let us follow him step by step in that very way. Let us not prescribe unto God, let us not presume to appoint the conditions of the covenant. But come, take God and Christ upon his own terms ; submit to that way of the covenant, and to those conditions of peace which the Lord prescribeth.

2. God in Christ keeps covenant with us ; so we through Christ, should be careful to keep covenant with God. The Lord never will, never hath broken covenants on his part ; but, alas ! we, on our parts, have broken the first covenant of works.* Let us take heed

~~~~~

\* Or rather the covenant of *justice*, made with our first parents before the fall.

we break not the second ; for then there remains not any more place for any more covenants. As the Lord keeps covenant with us, so let us keep covenant with him ; and therein is the blessing. “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, to such as keep his covenant.”

Sundry acts of faith are required to this keeping of covenant :—

(1.) Faith in keeping the covenant hath always an eye to the rule and command of God. As in things to be believed, faith looks on the promise ; so in things to be practised, faith looks on the command. Faith will present no strange fire before the Lord, it knows that God will accept of nothing but what is according to his own will. (2.) As faith takes direction from the rule, so, in keeping of the covenant, it directs us to the right end, that is, to the glory of God. We are of him, and live in him, and by faith we must live to him and for him. “For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself ; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.” (3.) Faith, in keeping the covenant, shields the soul against all hinderances that it meets with. Sometimes we are tempted by the baits and allurements of the world ; “All these will I give thee,” saith the world, “if thou wilt be mine ;” but then faith overcomes the world, setting before us better things than these. Sometimes we are tempted by crosses, afflictions, persecutions, and sufferings for the name of Christ ; but then faith makes us conquerors through Christ that loved us, by setting before us the end of our faith and patience. (4.) Faith encourageth the soul, that the Lord will have a gracious respect unto its keeping covenant. “In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.” Surely this is no small encouragement to well doing. What would not a servant do, if he knew his Lord would take it in good part ? Now, faith assures the soul there is not one prayer, one holy desire, or one good

thought or word, which is spoken or done to the glory of God, but God takes notice of it, and accepts it in good part. Oh my soul ! art thou acquainted with these acts of faith, enabling thee, in some good measure, to keep covenant with God ? Then is there a sweet conformity betwixt thee and Jesus.

3. God in Christ hath highly honoured us, as we are his people ; so we through Christ, should honour him highly, as he is our God. This is the main end of the covenant. Oh ! my soul, be like to God, bear the image and resemblance of God thy Father in this respect : he hath humbled himself to advance thee ; then humble thyself to advance him ; endeavour every way to exalt his name. We are willing to be in covenant with God, that we may set up ourselves, that we may sit upon thrones, and possess a kingdom : but we must think especially of setting up the Lord upon his throne. " Ascribe greatness to our God," saith Moses. Make it a name and a praise unto him, that he hath vouchsafed to make us his people, and to take us into covenant with himself. Honour him as he is God, but honour him more abundantly, as he is our God. Who should honour him, if his people do not ? The world knows him not ; " The world will not seek after God ;" —God is not in all their thoughts. And shall God have no honour ? Shall he that stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and formed man upon it, have no glory ? Oh yes ! the Lord himself answers, " This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." Surely God will have praise from his own people, whom he hath taken unto himself. " He will be glorified in all that come near him." But how should we honour God ? I answer, We must lie under the authority of every word of God, and conform ourselves to the example of God ; that is, we must labour to become followers of God, and imitate his excellencies. It is a part of that honour which children owe to their parents, to obey their commands, and to imitate their example. We cannot honour God more, than when we are *humbled at his feet to receive his word*, than when we

renounce the manners of the world to become his followers as dear children. Oh! think of this; for when we conform indeed, then we are “holy as he is holy, pure as he is pure;” and then, how should this but tend to the honour and glory of our good God?

Thus far we have looked on Jesus, as our Jesus, in that dark time before his coming in the flesh. Our next work is to look on Jesus carrying on the great work of man’s salvation, in his first coming or incarnation.

# LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS BIRTH.

---

## THE THIRD BOOK.

---

### CHAP. I.

#### SECT. I.—*Of the Tidings of Christ.*

IN this period, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object ; and secondly, direct you how to look unto it. The object is Jesus, carrying on the work of man's salvation, in his first coming in the flesh until his coming again. But because in this long period we have many transactions which we cannot with conveniency despatch together ; we shall therefore break it into smaller pieces, and present this object, Jesus Christ ; 1. In his birth. 2. In his life. 3. In his death. 4. In his resurrection. 5. In his ascension, session at God's right hand, and mission of his Holy Spirit. 6. In his intercession for his saints ; in which business he will be employed till his second coming to judgment.

1. For the transactions of Jesus in his birth. Some things we must propound before, and some things after his birth ; so that we shall continue this period till the time of John's baptism, or the exercise of his ministry upon earth. Now in all the transactions of this time, we

shall especially handle these : 1. The tidings of Christ. 2. The conception of Christ. 3. The duplicity of natures in Christ. 4. The wonderful union, notwithstanding that distinction. 5. The birth of Christ. 6. Some consequents after his birth, whilst yet a child of twelve years old.

The first passage in relation to his birth, is, the tidings of Christ : this appears, Luke i. 26, 27, 28, &c. " And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God," &c. I shall a little insist on some of these words. 1. The messenger is an angel. Man was too mean to carry the news of the conception of God. Never any business was conceived in heaven, that did so much concern the earth, as the conception of the God of heaven in a womb of earth ; no less therefore than an angel was worthy to bear these tidings ; and never angel received a greater honour, than of this embassage. 2. This angel salutes the virgin ; " Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou among women." Many men and women have been, and are the spiritual temples of God ; but never was any the material temple of God, but only Mary ; and therefore, " blessed art thou among women :" and yet we cannot say that she was so blessed in bearing Christ, as she was in believing in Christ ; her bearing was more miraculous, but her believing was more beneficial to her soul. 3. This virgin is troubled at this salute. She might well be troubled ; for, (1.) If it had been but a man that had come in so suddenly, when she expected none ; or so secretly, when she had no other company ; or so strongly, the doors being probably shut ; she had cause to be troubled ; how much more, when the glory of the angel heightened the astonishment ? (2.) Her sex was more subject to fear : if Zachary was amazed with the sight of this angel, how much more the virgin ? But the angel comforts her ; " Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God." 4. Here is the foundation of her comfort, and our happiness ; " Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus." Never was mortal creature thus

honoured, that her womb should yield that flesh, which was personally united to the Godhead ; that she should bear him that upholds the world. There is one wonder in the conception, another in the fruit ; both are marvellous, but the latter is more mysterious, and fuller of admiration. The fruit of the womb is Jesus, a Saviour, the Son of the Highest, a King ; God shall give him a throne, and he shall reign for ever ; for “ of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Here was a Son, and such a Son as the world never had before ; and here was the ground of Mary’s joy : how could she but rejoice, to hear what her Son should be before he was ? Surely, never was any mother so glad of her son born, as this virgin was of her Son before he was conceived.

The ground of this joy lay more especially in that name of Jesus. Here, Christians, is the object that you are to look unto. The first title that the angel gives our Saviour, is Jesus, *a Saviour*. Oh come, let us dwell a little here. Without Jesus we had never known God our friend ; and without Jesus, God had never known us for any other than his enemies. This name Jesus is better to us than all the titles of God. Indeed there is goodness and greatness in the name Jehovah ; but we merited so little good, and deserved so much evil, that in it alone there had been small comfort for us ; but in the name of Jesus, there is comfort, and with the name of Jesus there is comfort in the name of God. In old times, God was known by his names of power, and of majesty, but his name of mercy was reserved till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy, by the mediation of his Son. And as this name is exalted above all names ; so are we to exalt his mercy above all his works. Oh ! it is an useful name ! In all depths, distresses, miseries, perplexities, we beseech God by the name of Jesus, to make good his own name, not to bear it for nought ; but as he is a Saviour, to save us. And this is our comfort, that God will never so remember our sins, as to forget his own blessed name ; and especially

this name Jesus. It is the highest, the dearest, the sweetest name to us of all the names of God.

The reason of this name was given by the angel to Joseph : “Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” But why from their sins ? We seem rather willing to be saved from poverty, ignominy, prison, death, hell. Sin is a thing that troubles but few : alas ! sin (if we understand it aright) is the very worst of evils. There is no poverty but sin, there is no shame but sin ; there is no prison but that prison is a paradise without sin ; there is no death that has any sting in it, but for sin ; “the sting of death is sin ;” take out the sting, and you may put the serpent in your bosom. Nay, I will say more, there would be no hell, were it not for sin. Sin first kindled the fire of hell, sin maintains it ; take away sin, and that tormenting flame goes out. Had it not been for sin, the devil had had no business in the world ; were it not for sin, he could never hurt a soul.

What abundance of benefits are here in one word, “He shall save his people from their sins ?” There is no evil incident to man, but it ceaseth to be evil when sin is gone. If Jesus takes away sin, he doth bless our very blessings, and sanctify our afflictions. He fetcheth peace out of trouble, riches out of poverty, honour out of contempt, liberty out of bondage. He pulls out the sting of death, puts out the fire of hell. As all evils are wrapt up in sin ; so he that saves us from sin, saves us from all evils whatsoever. This is that Jesus, the Son of God’s love, the Author of our salvation, “In whom God is well pleased ;” and whom the angel published before he was conceived : “Thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus.”

#### SECT. II. *Of the Conception of Christ.*

THE conception of Christ was the conclusion of the angel’s message. No sooner had the virgin said, “Be it

to me according to thy word ;" but according to that word it was : immediately the Holy Ghost over-shadows her, and forms our Saviour in her womb. Now, brethren ! now was the time of love. Well may we say, now was it that the day brake out, that the sun arose, that darkness vanished, that wrath gave place to favour and salvation : now was it, that free grace came down from heaven, thousands of angels waiting on her ; the very clouds part (as it were) to give her way ; the earth springs to welcome her ; the floods clap their hands for joy ; the heavenly hosts sing as she goes along, " Glory to God in the highest, peace upon earth, good will towards men :" truth and righteousness go before her, peace and prosperity follow after her, pity and mercy wait on either hand, and when she first sets her foot on the earth, she cries, " A Jesus ! a Saviour !—Hear, ye sons of men ! The Lord hath sent me down to bring you news of Jesus ! Grace and peace be unto you : I will live with you in this world, and you shall live with me in the world to come." —Here was blessed news ! This is gospel, pure gospel ; this is glad tidings : free grace proclaims Jesus, and Jesus is made up as it were all of free grace. What eternal thanks do we owe to the eternal God ! How may we say with the angels, " Glory to God for Jesus Christ !"

But in this conception of Christ are so many wonders, that ere we begin to speak them, we may stand amazed : " Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness : God manifest in the flesh." Say, is it not a wonder, a mystery, a great mystery, that the Son of God should be made of a woman, even made of that woman which was made by himself ? Is it not a wonder, that her womb *then*, and that the heavens *now*, should contain him, " whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain !" —Concerning this conception of Christ, I shall speak but a little : what man can conceive much of this ? Our greatest light we borrow from the angel, who describes it thus : " The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Out of these

words, observe, 1. The agent: 2. The effect. 1. The agent or efficient cause of Christ's conception, is the Holy Ghost. This agrees with that speech of the angel to Joseph : "That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost." This conception of Christ was by the operation or virtue of the Holy Ghost ; or by the energetical command and ordination of the Holy Ghost, whereby that part of the virgin's blood, or seed, whereof the body of Christ was to be framed, was so cleansed and sanctified, that in it there should be neither spot nor stain of original pollution. 2. The effect was the framing of Christ's manhood, in which we may observe the matter and manner. (1.) For the matter: observe we the matter of the body, and of the soul of Christ. The matter of the body of Christ was the very flesh and blood of the virgin. "He was made of a woman," saith the apostle, i. e. of the flesh and blood and substance of the woman. And "he was made of the seed of David (saith the apostle) according to the flesh;" otherwise he could not have been the Son of David, according to the flesh. The soul of Christ was not derived from the soul of the virgin, but it was made as the souls of other men be, i. e. of nothing, by the power of God ; and so infused into the body by the hand of God. (2.) For the manner of forming Christ's human nature, it was miraculous. The angel ascribes two actions to the Holy Ghost in this great work ; the one to come upon the virgin, the other to overshadow her ; by these is signified the extraordinary work of the Holy Ghost in fashioning the human nature of Christ. But we should not search overmuch into this great mystery. Alas ! it is too high for us ; if the course of ordinary generation be a secret, how past all comprehension is this extraordinary operation ? "I know the Word was made flesh, (saith Chrysostom) but how he was made I know not."

SECT. III. *The Duplicity of Natures in Christ.*

THE duplicity of natures in Christ appears, in that he was truly God and truly man. "To us a child is born," saith the prophet; there is a nature human; and "He shall be called the mighty God;" there is a nature Divine. God sent his Son, saith the apostle, therefore truly God: and the Son made of a woman, therefore truly man.

First, that Christ is true God, both apparent Scriptures, and unanswerable reasons drawn from Scriptures evince.

1. The Scriptures call him God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And "unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever." And Thomas "answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." "Take heed to yourselves," said St. Paul, "and to all the flock—to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." And "hereby perceive we the love of God," says St. John, "because he laid down his life for us." And "we know that the Son of God is come. This is the true God and eternal life." And "without controversy," adds the former apostle, "great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh."

2. Unanswerable reasons drawn from Scriptures, prove him God: thus it appears,—(1.) From those incommutable properties of the Deity, which are ascribed unto him: he is eternal as God, Rev. i. 17. He is infinite as God, Matt. xxviii. 20. He is omniscient as God, Matt. ix. 4. He is omnipotent as God: "He that cometh from above is above all—He is able to subdue all things unto himself—He hath the keys of hell and death." (2.) From those acts ascribed to him which are only agreeable to the Divine nature, as, to hear the prayers of the people, John xiv. 14. To judge the quick and the dead, John v. 22. And thus he creates as God, John i. 4. He commands as God, Matt. viii. 26. He forgives as God, Matt. ix. 6. He sanctifies as God, John i. 12. He glorifies as God, John x. 28. (3.) From all those acknowledgments

given to him by the saints, which are only proper unto God ; and thus he is believed on as God, John iii. 18. He is loved as God, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. He is obeyed as God, Matt. xvii. 5. He is prayed to as God, Acts vii. 59. He is praised as God, Rev. v. 13. He is adored as God, Heb. i. 6, Phil. ii. 10. Surely all these are strong demonstrations that Christ Jesus is God.

But why was it requisite that our Saviour should be God ? I answer, 1. Because none can save souls, nor satisfy for sin, but God alone. “ There is none (saith the Psalmist,) that can by any means redeem his brother, or give a ransom for him. But God will redeem my soul from the power of hell.” 2. Because the satisfaction which is made for sin must be infinitely meritorious. An infinite wrath cannot be appeased, but by an infinite merit ; and hence our Saviour must needs be God, to the end that his obedience and sufferings might be of infinite worth. 3. Because the burden of God’s wrath cannot be endured by a finite creature : Christ therefore must be God, that he might abide the burden by his Divine power. 4. Because the enemies of our salvation were too strong for us : how could any creature overcome satan, death, hell, damnation ? Ah ! this required the power of God, there is none but God that could destroy “ him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

Secondly, As Christ is God, so he is true man. He was born as man, and bred as man, and fed as man, and slept as man, and wept as man, and sorrowed as man, and suffered as man, and died as man. But more particularly : 1. Christ had a human body, “ Wherefore when he came into the world, he said, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” 2. Christ had an human reasonable soul : “ My soul is heavy unto death,” saith Christ ; and again, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.” “ Surely,” saith Nazianzen, “ either he had a soul, or he will never save a soul.” 3. Christ had all the properties that belong either

to the soul or body of a man : nay more than so, Christ had all the infirmities of our nature, sin only excepted : I say, the infirmities of our nature, as he suffered and was sensible of cold, and heat, and hunger, and thirst, and weariness, and weakness, and pain.

But why was it requisite that our Saviour should be man ? I answer, 1. Because our Saviour must suffer and die for our sins, which the Godhead could not do. 2. Because our Saviour must perform obedience to the law. 3. Because our Saviour must satisfy the justice of God in the same nature wherein it was offended. 4. Because by this means we might have free access to the throne of grace, and might find help in our necessities, “ having such an High-priest as was in all things tempted like unto us,” Heb. iv. 15.

A real distinction of these two natures is evident. 1. In regard of essence, the Godhead cannot be manhood, nor can the manhood be the Godhead. 2. In regard of properties, the Godhead is most wise, just, omnipotent, yea, wisdom, justice, omnipotency itself, and so is not the manhood, neither can it be. 3. They have distinct wills : “ Not my will, but thy will be done, O Father ! ” Plainly differencing the will of a creature from the will of a Creator. 4. The very actions in the work of redemption are inseparable, and yet distinguishable ; “ I lay down my life, and take it up again.” To lay it down was the action of man not of God ; and to take it up was the action of God, not of man ; in these respects we say each nature remains in itself entire, without any conversion, commixion, or confusion. There is no conversion of one into the other, as when he changed the water into wine ; no composition of both, no abolition of either, no confusion at all. It is easy to observe this real distinction of his two natures from first to last ; as, 1. He was conceived as others, and so he was man ; but he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, as never man was ; and which shews he is God. 2. He was born as others, and so he was man ; but he was born of a virgin, as

never man was ; and this speaks him God. 3. He was crucified, died, and was buried, and so he was man ; but he rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and from thence shall come at last to judge the quick and the dead, and therefore he is God.

**SECT. IV. *Of the Union of the two Natures of Christ, in one and the same Person.***

The union of two natures of Christ, in one and the self-same person, is that great wonder, which now we must speak of as we are able. But alas ! how should we speak of this union, and not be confounded in ourselves ? It is a great mystery, a secret, a wonder. Many wonders have been since the beginning of the world ; but all the wonders that ever were must give place to this. Neither the creation of all things out of nothing, nor the restoration of all things into their perfect being ; I mean neither the first work, nor the last work of God in this world, (though most admirable,) may be compared with this. This union of the two natures of Christ in one person is the highest pitch of God's wisdom, goodness, power, and glory.

In the explication of this union, that which I shall insist on, (as the most necessary for our understanding,) is, 1. The union itself. 2. The effects or benefits of it. 1. For the union itself we shall discuss, wherein this union consists. The scriptural texts that confirm this union. The person assuming, and the nature assumed : and of these as briefly as I may.

(1.) This union consists in that dependence of the human nature on the Word, and in that communicating of the person or substance of the Word, with the human nature that is assumed ; so that it is such an union that both natures make one person of Christ.

(2.) For the scriptural texts that confirm this union ? Among many I shall only cite these. When Christ asked his apostles, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man

am? Simon Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now if but one Christ, then surely but one person: and if the Son of Man be the Son of the living God, then surely there are two natures in that one person. Observe how the Son of Man and the Son of God, very man and very God, concentrate in Christ. As the soul and the body make but one man, so the Son of man and the Son of God made but one Christ: "Thou art Christ," saith Peter, "the Son of the living God." Thus Paul, speaking of Jesus, the Son of God. He tells us, "that he was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit." 1. Made of the seed of David; of the substance of the virgin, who was David's posterity. 2. Declared to be the Son of God. The word in the original signifies a declaration by a solemn sentence or definitive judgment. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son." That which I point at: he is the Son of David, *καὶ σαρκα*, in respect of his manhood; and he is the Son of God, *καὶ πνεύμα*, in respect of his Godhead; here be the two natures; but, according to the words before; these two natures make but one Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And in the very words themselves he is declared to be the Son of God; he doth not say sons, as of two; but his Son Jesus Christ, first before, and then after; to shew unto us, that as before his making, so after his making, he is still but one Son, or one person of the two distinct natures subsisting. To the same purpose is that text: "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" by the union of the Divine nature with the human in the unity of his person, the Godhead dwelleth in Christ as the soul in the body. "It dwelleth in him bodily;" not seemingly, but really; not figuratively, and in a shadow, as he dwelleth in the temple; not by power and efficacy, as he dwells in all the creatures; not by grace, as in his people; nor by glory, as in the saints above; but essentially, substantially, per-

sonally, the human nature being assumed into union with the person of the Word. Observe the passages : he in whom that fulness dwells is the person ; that fulness, which doth so dwell in him, is the nature. Now there dwells in him not only the fulness of the Godhead, but the fulness of the manhood also ; for we believe him to be both perfect God, begotten of the substance of his Father before all worlds, and perfect man, made of the substance of his mother in this world ; only he in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth, is one ; and he in whom the fulness of the manhood dwelleth, is another ; but he in whom the fulness of both these natures dwelleth is one and the same Immanuel, and consequently one and the same person ; in him, i.e. in his person, dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead and all the fulness of the manhood.

(3.) For the person assuming, and the nature assumed.

1. The person assuming was a Divine person. It was not the Divine nature that assumed a human person, but the Divine Person that assumed a human nature ; and of the three Divine Persons, it was neither the first nor the third ; neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost that did assume this nature ; but it was the Son, the middle Person.
2. The nature assumed was the seed of Abraham : "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Elsewhere the apostle calls it the seed of David : "He is made of the seed of David according to the flesh." And, elsewhere he is called the seed of the woman : "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." And, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman." No question she was the material principle of which that precious flesh was made, and the Holy Ghost, the agent and efficient. That blessed womb of her's was the bride-chamber, wherein the Holy Ghost did knit that indissoluble knot betwixt our human nature and his Deity ; the Son of God assuming into the unity of his person, that which before he had not, even our

human nature. Oh! with what astonishment may we behold, our dust and ashes assumed into the unity of God's own person!

These are the deep things of God, and indeed so exceedingly mystical, that they can never be perfectly declared by any man. Bernard compares this ineffable mystery of the union of the two natures with that incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity in Unity. In the Trinity are three persons and one nature; in Christ are two natures and one person; that of the Trinity is indeed the greatest, and this of the incarnation is like unto it; they both far exceed man's capacity; "for his way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known."

2. For the effects and benefits of this union; they are either, First, in respect of Christ; or, Secondly, in respect of Christians. 1. Those in respect of Christ, are,  
1. An exemption from all sin. 2. A collation of all graces.  
3. A communication of all the properties.

1. We find that although Christ appeared as a sinner, and that he was numbered among the wicked," or "with the transgressors," Isai. liii. 12; yet, in truth, "he did no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth," 1 Pet. ii. 22. The apostle tells us, "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" he assumed the nature of man, yet by reason of this pure conception, and of this union, he was conceived, and born, and lived without sin; he took upon him the seed of man, but not the sin of man, save only by imputation.

2. The graces collated unto the humanity of Christ, by reason of his union, are very many. I shall instance in some: 1. That the manhood is a peculiar temple for the Deity of Christ to dwell in. It is the place wherein the Godhead shews itself more manifestly and more gloriously than in any other creature. It is true, that by his Providence he shews himself in all his creatures, and by his grace in his saints; but he is most gloriously, eternally, according to the fulness of his Deity, in the

humanity of Jesus Christ: "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" Some are of opinion, that as now in this life, "No man cometh unto God but by Christ;" so hereafter, in the next life, no man shall see God, but in the face of Jesus Christ. (2.) That the manhood of Christ, according to its measure, is a partner with the Godhead in the work of redemption and meditation. As he is Immanuel in respect of his person, so he is Immanuel in respect of his office. He must needs be man as well as God, that he might be able to send this comfortable message to the sons of men; "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (3.) That the manhood of Christ, together with the Godhead, is adored and worshipped with Divine honour. Not that we worship the manhood alone, as merely a creature; but that we adore the person of Christ, which consisteth of the manhood, and of the Godhead. (4.) That the manhood hath an extraordinary measure of habitual graces poured into it. In this he excels the very angels, for to them was given grace only by measure; but to the humanity of Christ was given grace without measure; even so much as a creature is any ways capable of. Never was there any but Christ, whose graces were no way stinted, and who was absolutely full of grace. Divines tell us of a double grace in Christ; the one of union, and that is infinite; the other of unction, (which is all one with grace habitual,) and that is in a sort infinite; for howsoever it be but a finite and created thing, yet, in the nature of grace, it hath no limitation, no bounds, but includeth in itself whatsoever any way pertains to grace. The reason of this unlimited grace bestowed on the nature of man in Christ, was, because that grace was given to it as to the universal cause, whence it was to be derived unto all others. He is the fountain of grace, "and of his fulness we receive grace for grace."

3. For the communication of the properties. It is a

kind of speech peculiar to the Scriptures, when the properties of either nature of Christ considered singly are attributed to the person of Christ. Thus we may say, that God was born of a virgin, and that God suffered, and God was crucified ; not simply in respect of his Godhead, but in respect of his person, or in respect of the human nature which God united to himself. And thus we may say, that the Man Christ is almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, yet not in respect of his manhood, but in respect of his person, which is God and man ; or in respect of the Divine nature of the Man Christ Jesus. For here man signifieth the whole person of Christ, and not merely the human nature. But, on the contrary, we may not say, that the Godhead of Christ was born of a virgin, or suffered, or was crucified ; nor may we say, that the manhood of Christ is almighty, omniscient, omnipresent ; because the Godhead and manhood are such words as note to us the two natures of Christ, the one Divine, and the other human, and not the person of Christ.

Secondly, The effects, or benefits, of this hypostatical union, in respect of Christians, are their spiritual union and communion with God and Christ.

1. There is a spiritual union of Christians with God in Christ. Oh ! the wonder of these two blessed unions ! first, of the personal union ; secondly, of the spiritual or mystical union. In the personal union, it pleased God to assume and unite our human nature to the Deity ; in this spiritual union, it pleased God to unite the person of every believer to the person of the Son of God. This union is mystical, and yet our very persons, natures, bodies, souls, are in a spiritual way conjoined to the body and soul of Christ ; so that we are members of the body of Christ, and of the flesh of Christ, and of the bones of Christ ; and as this conjunction is immediately made with his human nature, so thereby we are also united to the Divine nature ; yea, the person of the believer is united to the glorious person of the Son of God.

Now, concerning this union, for our better understanding, observe these three things. (1.) It is a most real union ; it is not a mere notional union, that consists only in the understanding ; it is not an imaginary thing, that hath no other being but only in the brain ; no, it is a true, real union. In natural unions, I confess, there may be more evidence, but there cannot be more truth.

(2.) It is a very near union. You will say, how near ? If an angel were to speak to you, he cannot satisfy you in this ; only as far as our understanding can reach it, and the creatures can serve to illustrate these things. Take it thus. Whatsoever by way of comparison can be alleged concerning the combination of any one thing with another, that, and much more, may be said of our union with Jesus Christ. See how near the father and the child are, how near the husband and the wife are ; see what union is between the branches and the vine, the members and the head. Nay, one thing more, see what the soul is to the body ; such is Christ, and so near is Christ, and nearer to the person of every true believer. "I live, yet not I," saith Paul, "but Christ liveth in me." As if he had said, as the soul is to the body of a natural man, so is Jesus Christ to my soul and body.

(3.) It is a total union ; that is, whole Christ is united to the whole believer, soul and body. If thou art united to Christ, thou hast all Christ ; thou art one with him in his nature, in his name ; thou hast the same image, grace, and spirit in thee, as he hath ; the same precious promises, the same access to God by prayer as he ; thou hast the same love of the Father ; all that he did or suffered thou hast a share in it ; thou hast his life and death ; all is thine. So on thy part, he hath thee wholly, thy nature, thy sins, the punishment of thy sins, thy wrath, thy curse, thy shame ; yea, thy wit, and wealth, and strength, all that thou art, or hast, or canst do possibly for him. It is a total union : "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." Whole Christ is mine, and all that I am, have, or can do, is his.

2. There is a spiritual communion with God in Christ. Both these are the effects of Christ's personal union : First, union to his person, and then communion with his benefits. Union, in proper speaking, is not unto any of the benefits flowing to us from Christ ; we are not united to forgiveness of sin, holiness, peace of conscience, but unto the person of the Son of God himself : and then, secondly, comes this communication of all the benefits arising from this union to the Lord Jesus : that as Christ was Priest, Prophet, and King ; so we also by him are, after a sort, priests, prophets, and kings : for, being made one with him, we are thereby possessed of all things that are his.

#### SECT. V *Of the Birth of Christ.*

1. The birth of Christ now follows. A thing so wonderful, that it was given for a sign unto believers seven hundred and forty years before it was accomplished. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give a sign ; behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son." But come a little nearer ; "Let us go to Bethlehem," as the shepherds said, "and see this thing which is come to pass!" If we step but one step into his lodging, heaven's wonder is before our eyes ; now look upon Jesus ! Look on him as in fulness of time he carried on the great work of our salvation. Here you may read the meaning of Adam's covenant, Abraham's promise, Moses's revelation, David's succession ; these were but veils, but now shall we draw aside the curtains. Come, take a view of the truth itself. What a strange birth is this ? Look on the babe, there is no cradle to rock him, no nurse to lull him, no linens to swaddle him, scarce a little food to nourish him. Look on the mother ; there is no midwives' help, no downy pillows, no linen hangings, scarce a little straw where she is brought to bed. Look on Joseph, his supposed father ; he rather begs than gives a blessing. Poor carpenter ! that makes them a chamber of an ox-stall.

Mary must bear a Son; an angel tells her, the Holy Ghost overshadows her, the days are accomplished, and she is delivered.

2. No sooner was Christ born, but righteousness looked down from heaven; she cast her eye upon earth, and seeing truth freshly sprung there, she looked and looked again. Certainly it was a sight to draw all the eyes of heaven to it. It is said of the angels, that, "they desired to look into these things." They looked wishfully at them, as if they would look through them. No question but righteousness looked as narrowly and piercingly as the angels. Before this time, she would not so much as look down towards the earth: righteousness had no prospect, no window open this way. But now the case is altered: no sooner doth our vine bud upon the earth, but she is willing to descend to look down. And no marvel; for what could righteousness desire to see and satisfy herself in, that was not to be seen in Jesus Christ? He was all righteous, there was not the least spot of sin in him. His birth was clean, and his life was holy, and his death was innocent. Both his soul and body were without all sin; both his spirit and his mouth were without all guile: whatsoever satisfaction righteousness would have, she might have it in him. "Lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the balance," and there is nothing in Jesus but straight for the line, and full weight for the balance.

3. For the meeting and agreement of all God's attributes as the effect of this, the verse before tells us, that "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Many means were made before Christ's time for this blessed meeting; but it could not be: "sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldest not." These means were not prevalent enough to cause it. Where stuck it? you will say; surely it was not on account of mercy, she was easy to be intreated; she looked up to heaven, but righteousness would not look

down ; and indeed here was the business : righteousness must and will have satisfaction ; either some satisfaction for sin must be given to God, or she will never meet more ; better that all men in the world were damned, than that the righteousness of God should be rendered unrighteous. But our Saviour is born ; and this birth occasions a gracious meeting of the attributes. Such an attractive is this birth, that all meet there ; indeed they cannot but meet in him. "Christ is mercy, and Christ is truth, and Christ is righteousness, and Christ is peace."

(1.) Christ is mercy. Thus Zacharias prophesied ; that "through the tender mercy of our God the Day-spring (or Branch) from on high hath visited us." And God, the Father of Christ, is called the Father of mercies ; as if mercy were his Son, who had no other Son but his dearly "beloved Son in whom he is well pleased."

(2.) Christ is truth. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." That truth in whom is accomplished whatsoever was prefigured of the Messiah. And this is his name, "The Lord, the Lord God, abundant in goodness and truth." "He is a God of truth," saith Moses ; "plenteous in mercy and truth," said David ; "full of grace and truth," said John. He is truth by name, and truth by nature, and truth by office.

(3.) Christ is righteousness. "This is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness."

(4.) Christ is peace. "This is his name wherewith he is called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

And according to his type, Melchisedeck, as he was "King of righteousness," so also he was "King of Salem, which is King of peace." Thus Christ is mercy, and Christ is truth, and Christ is righteousness, and Christ is peace. Now where should all these meet, but in him who is them all ? Surely there they may meet, and at the meeting they all ran first and kissed the Son ; and that done, truth ran to mercy, and embraced her, and righteousness to peace, and kissed

her. They, that had so long been parted, now meet, and are made friends again. O the blessed effects of this birth of Christ! It is Christ that reconciled them, and reconciled us to them. "He reconciled all things," saith the apostle, "whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Now is heaven at peace with itself, and heaven and earth at peace one with another; and that which glues all, and makes the peace, is this birth of Christ.

#### SECT. VI. *Of some Consequents of Christ's Birth.*

Some consequents of the birth of Christ may be touched, till he was a child of twelve years old.

1. When he was but eight days old, he was circumcised, and named Jesus. In this early humiliation he plainly discovered the riches of his grace; now he sheds his blood in drops, and thereby gives an earnest of those rivers which he afterwards poured out for the cleansing of our nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God; and for a further discovery of his grace, at this time his name is given him, which was Jesus. This is the name which we should engrave on our hearts, rest our faith on, and place our help in, and love with the overflowings of charity, joy, and adoration; above all things, we had need of Jesus, a Saviour for our souls, both from our sins, and from the everlasting destruction which sin would otherwise bring upon our souls. Hence this name Jesus, and this sign circumcision, are joined together; for by the effusion of his blood he was to be our Jesus, our Saviour: "Without shedding of blood is no remission," no salvation. Circumcision was the seal, and now was it that our Jesus was under God's great seal to take his office: "Him hath God the Father sealed," John vi. 27. It is his office and his very profession to save, that all may repair unto him for that end: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary;" and "him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

2. When he was forty days old, "He was brought to Jerusalem, and presented to the Lord ; as it is written in the law of the Lord, every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord." O wonder ! there was no impurity in the Son of God, and yet he is first circumcised ; and then he is brought and offered to the Lord. He that came to be sin for us, would in our persons be legally unclean, that by satisfying the law, he might take away our uncleanness. He that was above the law would come under the law, that he might free us from the law. We are all born sinners ; but O the unspeakable mercies of our Jesus, that provides a remedy as early as our sin. First, he is conceived, and then he is born, to sanctify our conceptions and our births ; and after his birth, he is first circumcised, and then he is presented to the Lord ; that by two holy acts, that which was naturally unholy might be hallowed unto God. Christ hath not left our very infancy without redress, but by himself thus offered he cleanseth us presently from our filthiness. Now is Christ brought in his mother's arms to his own house, the temple ; and as man he is presented to himself as God. You will say, what is this to me, or to my soul ? O yes ! Jerusalem is now every where ; there is no church assembly, no Christian heart, which is not a temple of the living God ; and there is no temple of God wherein Christ is not presented to his Father. Thus we have the benefit of Christ's fulfilling the law of righteousness ; "God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

3. When he was yet under one year old, as some, or about two, as others think, he fled into Egypt. As there was no room for him in Bethlehem, so now there is no room for him in all Judea. No sooner he came to his own, but he must flee from them. What a wonder is this ? Could not Christ have delivered himself from Herod a thousand ways ? What could an arm of flesh

have done against the God of spirits ? But hereby he taught us to bear the yoke even in our youth. Thus would he suffer, that he might sanctify to us our earthly afflictions. What a change is here ? Israel, the first-born of God, flies out of Egypt into Judea; and Christ, the first-born of all creatures, flies out of Judea into Egypt ! Now is Egypt become the sanctuary, and Judea the inquisition house of the Son of God. Surely he that is every where the same, knows how to make all places alike to his. He knows how to preserve Daniel in the lions' den ; the three children in the fiery furnace ; Jonah in the whale's belly, and Christ in the midst of Egypt.

4. When he was now five years old, say some, an angel appears again in a dream to Joseph, saying, " Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and return again into the land of Israel, for they are dead which sought the young child's life." Herod, that took away the lives of all the infants in or about Bethlehem, is now himself dead, and gone to his own place. O the wonderful dispensation of Christ in concealing himself from men ! All this while he carries himself as an infant ; " take the young child and his mother." He suppressed the manifestation and exercise of that Godhead whereto the infant nature was conjoined. As the birth of Christ, so the infancy of Christ was exceeding humble. O how should we magnify him, or deject ourselves for him, who himself became thus humble for our sakes !

5. When he was twelve years old, he, with his parents, goes up to Jerusalem, " after the custom of the feast." This pious act of his younger years was intended to lead our first years into timely devotion. But I shall not insist on that ; I would rather observe him " sitting in the midst of the doctors in the temple, both hearing them, and asking them questions." He who, as God, gave them all the wisdom they had, doth now, as the Son of Man, hearken to the wisdom he had given them ; and when he had heard, then he asks ; and after that, no doubt, he answers ; his very questions were instructions ; for I

cannot think that he meant so much to learn, as to teach those doctors of Israel. Surely those rabbins had never heard the voice of such a tutor ; they could not but see the very wisdom of God in this child ; and therefore, saith the text, " they all wondered ;" or, " they were all astonished at his understanding and answers ;" their eyes saw nothing but a child, but their ears heard the wonderful things of God's law. But why did ye not, O ye Jewish teachers, remember now the star and the sages, the angels and the shepherds ? Why did ye not now bethink yourselves of Herod, and of his inquiry, and of your answer, that in Bethlehem of Judea Christ should be born ? You cited the prophets, and why did you not mind that prophecy now, that " unto us a Child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace ?" Fruitless is the wonder that endeth not in faith. No light is sufficient, where the eyes are held through unbelief and prejudice.

6. After this, from twelve to the thirtieth year of his age, we read nothing of the acts of Christ, but that " he went down with his parents unto Nazareth, and was subject to them." As he went up to Jerusalem to worship God, so he goes down to Nazareth to attend his particular calling. This is the meaning of those words, " and he was subject to them." Christ's subjection to his parents extended to the profession and exercise of his life. Certainly Christ was not all that time, from twelve to thirty years, idle ; as he was educated by his parents, so of his reputed father he learnt to be a carpenter: this, I take it, is plain in these words, " Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary ?" Oh ! the poverty, humility, severity of Jesus ! It appears at this time especially, in his labouring, working, hewing of wood, or the like. Here is a sharp reproof to all those that spend their time in idleness, or without a particular calling. What ! are they wiser than Christ ? Our Jesus would not by any means thus spend his time. But concerning this time of

his youth, because in Scripture there is so deep a silence, I shall therefore pass it by.

Thus far have I propounded the object we are to look unto; it is Jesus, in his first coming, or incarnation, while yet a child of twelve years old. Our next work is to direct you in the art or mystery, how we are to look unto him in this respect.

## CHAP. II.

### *SECT. I. Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Birth.*

WHAT looking comprehends, you have heard before: and that we may have an inward experimental look on him whom our souls pant after, let us practise all these particulars.

1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his incarnation. Let us learn what he did for us when he came amongst us. There is not one passage in his first appearing, but is of mighty concernment unto us. Is it possible that the great God of heaven and earth should so infinitely condescend but on some great design? And what design could there be, but only his glory and the creatures' good? O my soul! if thou hast any interest in Christ, all this concerns thee. The Lord Jesus, in these very transactions, had an eye to thee; he was incarnate for thee, he was conceived and born for thee. Look not on the bare history of things, for that is unprofitable; the main duty is eying the end, the meaning of Christ, and especially as it relates to thyself. Alas! what comfort were it to a poor prisoner, if he should hear that the king, of his mere grace, visited all the prisoners in this or that dungeon, and that he made a gaol-delivery, and set all free, but never came near the place where he lay bound in irons? Or suppose he gives a visit to that very man, and offers him grace

and pardon, if he will but accept of it ; and, because of his waywardness, persuades, entreats, commands him to come out and take his liberty ; and yet he will not regard or apply it to himself, what comfort can he have thereby ? What benefit can he receive ? Dear soul, this is thy case, if thou art not in Christ, if thou hast not heard the offer, and embraced and closed with it, then what is Christ's incarnation, conception, nativity, unto thee ? Come, learn, not merely as a scholar, to gain some notional knowledge ; but as a Christian, as one that feels virtue coming out of Christ in every one of these respects. Study closely this great transaction in reference to thyself. I know not how it happens ; this subject either savours not with some Christians, or it is seldom thought of by the most. O God forbid that we should throw out of doors such a blessed necessary truth ! If rightly applied, it is a Christian's joy : "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, that shall be to all people ; for unto you is born in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Sure the birth of Christ is of mighty concernment unto thee : "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." There is not any piece of this transaction but it is of special use. How many break their brains, and waste their spirits, in studying arts and sciences, things in comparison of no value ? Whereas Paul "determined not to know any thing but Jesus Christ." To know Jesus Christ in every point, whether in birth, or life, or death, it is saving knowledge. O stand not upon cost, whether pains or study, tears or prayers, peace or wealth, goods or name, life or liberty ; sell all for this pearl. Christ is of that worth that thou canst never over-buy him, though thou gavest thyself and all the world for him. The study of Christ is the study of studies ; the knowledge of Christ is the knowledge of every thing that is necessary, either for this world, or for the world to come. O study Christ in all the aforesaid respects.

*SECT. II. Considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation at his first coming or incarnation. It is not enough to study and know these great mysteries, but, according to the measure of knowledge we have, we must muse, meditate on, ponder, and consider them. This consideration brings Christ closer to the soul. Consideration fastens Christ more strongly to the soul, and, as it were, rivets the soul to Jesus Christ. A soul that truly considers and meditates on Christ, thinks and talks of nothing else but Christ. It takes hold, and will not let him go. I will keep to thee, (saith the soul in meditation,) for thou art my life. Thus, O my soul, consider thou of Christ, and of what he did for thee when he was incarnate ! and that thou mayest not confound thyself in thy meditations, consider apart these particulars.

1. Consider Jesus in his fore-runner, and the blessed tidings of his coming in the flesh. Now the long-looked for time drew near, a glorious angel is sent from heaven, and he comes with an olive-branch of peace ; first he presents himself to Zecharias, and then to Mary ; to her he imparts the message on which God sent him into this world : "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus." Till now human nature was less than that of angels ; but by the incarnation of the Word, it was to be exalted above the cherubim. What blessed tidings was this message ! The decree of old must now be accomplished, and an angel proclaims it upon earth. "Hear, O ye sons of Adam, this concerns you as much as the virgin : were ye not all undone in the loins of his first father ? Was not this our condition, that after a little life upon earth, we should have been thrown into eternal torments, where had been nothing but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth ? And now that God and Christ should bid an angel tell the news, Ye shall not die : lo ! a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and he shall be your Jesus. He shall save

you from this hell, and death, and sin. He shall deliver your souls ; he shall save to the utmost. His name is Jesus, and he shall not bear his name for nought. Believe in him, and ye shall live with him in glory." O blessed news ! Men may talk what they will of this and that news, but none is so welcome to one ready to perish, as to hear of a Saviour. Tell a man in his sickness of one that will make him well again ; tell a man in captivity of one that will set him free ; tell a man in prison, condemned to die, of one with a pardon that will save his life ; and every one of these will say, this is the best news that ever was heard. Oh ! then, if it be good tidings to hear of a saviour, where is only a matter of loss of life, or of this earth ; how much more when it comes to the loss of heaven, to the danger of hell, when our souls are at stake, and likely to be damned for ever ! What glad tidings would that be, to hear of one that could save our souls from the destroyer ? Is not such a Saviour worth the hearkening after ? Were not the birth of such a one good news ? O my soul, ponder these words, as if an angel, seeing thee stand on the brink of hell, should speak to thee, even to thy soul.

2. Consider Jesus in his conception. No sooner is the news heard, but Christ is conceived by the Holy Ghost in the virgin's womb : this conception is worthy our consideration. What ! that the great God of heaven should descend so far as to take our nature upon him, and to take it in the same way, and after the same manner as we do ? We must not be too curious to inquire after the manner of the Holy Ghost's operation. This is work for our hearts, and not merely for our heads. Humble faith, and not curious inquisition, shall find the sweetness of this mystery. It was David's complaint, " Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." O my soul, this was thy case in thy very first being, and hadst thou died in that condition, the word is express, that " nothing undefiled nor unclean should enter into the kingdom of glory." But here is the remedy,

thy sinful conception is sanctified by Christ's holy conception. The holiness of thy Jesus serves to hide thy original pollutions from the eye of God. Oh! consider this conception thus, till thou bringest it near and close to thy soul, till thou feelest some sweetness and power coming and flowing from Jesus in the womb.

3. Consider the duplicity of natures in Jesus Christ: "The Word made flesh." No sooner was he conceived than he was God-man; he was perfectly framed, and instantly united to the eternal Word: *God sent his Son*, there is the nature Divine; *made of a woman*, there is the nature human. Certainly great is this mystery, that the Word is made flesh; that the Son of God is made of a woman; that a star gives light to the sun; that a branch doth bear the vine; that a creature gives being to the Creator. Admire, O my soul, at this! but withal consider that all this was for us and our salvation. He was man, that he might die for us; and he was God, that his death might be sufficient to save us. Had he been man alone, not God, he might have suffered, but he could never have satisfied for sin; he could not have been Jesus, a Saviour of souls. Had he been God alone, not man, he would not have been akin to our nature offending; and so he could not have satisfied the justice of God in the same nature wherein it was offended; neither could he, as God alone, have died for sin; and the decree was, that our Redeemer must die for sin; "for without shedding of blood there is no remission;" and no shedding of blood could possibly befall the Godhead of Christ. O my soul, consider this in relation to thyself; he is God-man, that he might suffer and satisfy for thy sins; he is God-man, that he might be able and fit to finish the work of thy salvation. As God he is able, and as man he is fit, to discharge the office of Mediator; as God, he is able to bear the punishment of sin; and as man, he is fit to suffer for sin. Oh! the wisdom of God in this! Man's nature can suffer death, but not overcome it; the Divine nature can overcome death and all things, but he cannot suffer

it. And hence there is a duplicity of natures in Jesus Christ. O muse on this; it is worthy thy serious consideration.

4. Consider the real distinction of these two natures in Christ. As the unapproachable light of the Godhead was put into human flesh, so these natures remained entire, without any conversion or confusion. They were not as wine and water, that become one by mixing; there is no such blending the Divine and human nature; they were not as snow and water, that become one by dissolving of the snow into the water; there is no such changing of the human nature into the Divine, or of the Divine nature into the human. Look, as at the first moment of his conception, he was God and man, so these two natures continued distinct in substance, properties, and actions. Consider this, O my soul, in reference to thyself: by this means thou hast free access unto the throne of grace; and as thou hast free access, so thou mayest boldly draw near! His Deity indeed confounds, but his humanity comforts feeble souls. His Divine nature amazeth, but his human nature encourageth us to come unto him. Even after his resurrection, he was pleased to send this comfortable message to the sons of men; "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." Now, as long as he is not ashamed to call us brethren, "God is not ashamed to be called our God." Oh! the sweet fruit that we may gather off this tree, the real distinction of two natures in Christ! As long as Christ is man, as well as God, we have a motive strong enough to appease his Father, and to turn his favourable countenance towards us. Here is our happiness, that "there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

5. Consider the union of the two natures of Christ in one and the same person. As he was the branch of the Lord, and the fruit of the earth, so these two natures were tied with such a knot as sin, hell, and the grave were never able to disunite: yea, though in the death of Christ

there was a separation of the soul from the body, yet in that separation the hypostatical union remained unshaken. In this meditation thou hast great cause, O my soul, to admire and adore! Wonderful things are spoken of thee, O Christ! He is God so as neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost were made flesh; and he is man in the nature of man. This is a mystery that no angel is able to comprehend. We have not another example of such an union. If thou wilt consider this great mystery of godliness any further, review what hath been said in the object propounded, where this union is set forth more largely and particularly; but especially consider the blessed effects of this union in reference to thyself. As our nature in the person of Christ is united to the Godhead, so our persons in and by this union of Christ are brought nigh to God. Hence it is that God doth set his sanctuary and tabernacle among us, and that he dwells with us; and, which is more, that he makes our persons, houses and habitations, wherein he himself is pleased to dwell by his Holy Spirit. By reason of this hypostatical union of Christ, the Spirit of Christ is given to us in the very moment of our regeneration. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father: and hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." As the members of the body, howsoever distinct amongst themselves, and all differing from the head, yet by reason of one soul informing both the head and members, all make one man; so all believers in Christ, howsoever distinct persons amongst themselves, and all distinct from the person of Christ, and especially from the Godhead, which is incommutable, yet by one and the same Spirit abiding in Christ and all his members, they become one. "There is one body, and one Spirit: he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit." O my soul, consider this; and in considering believe thy part in this; and the rather, because the means of this union on thy part is a true and lively faith. Faith is the first effect and instrument of the Spirit of

Christ, disposing and enabling thy soul to cleave unto Christ ; and “ for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”

6. Consider the birth of Christ, who in his Divine generation was the Son of God, in his human generation was born in a stable, for the saving of the children of men. Suppose the Holy Ghost came upon thee, to form and fashion thee in Jesus Christ; (thus Paul bespeaks the Galatians, “ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you) would not this affect thee ? Would not thy whole soul be taken up with this ? Come, receive Christ into thy soul ; or if that work be done, if Christ be formed in thee, O cherish him ! (I speak of the spiritual birth) O keep him in thy heart ! Let him there bud and blossom, and bear fruit ; let him fill thy soul with his Divine graces ; O that thou couldst say it feelingly, “ I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me !” O that this were the issue of thy meditation on Christ’s birth, even whilst thou art going with the shepherds to Bethlehem, and there findest thy Saviour lying in a cratch, that thou wouldest bring him thence, and make thy heart to be his cradle ! I would not give a farthing for a meditation merely on the history of Christ’s birth. Either draw virtue from him within, or thy meditation will be fruitless.

7. Consider those few consequents of Christ’s birth. Every action of Christ is our instruction. Here are many particulars, but none in vain. Christ is considered under much variety of notions, but he is still sweet under all. Is it possible, O my soul, that thou shouldst tire thyself in the contemplation of Jesus Christ ? If one flower yield thee not pleasure or delight, go to a second, a third, For a while observe the circumcision of Jesus Christ, and gather some honey out of that flower. Christ had never been circumcised but that the same might be done to our souls that was done to his body. O that the same Christ would do that in us that was done to him for us,

Again, observe Christ's presentation in the temple. This was the law of those that first opened the womb, Now Christ was the first-born of Mary, and indeed the first-born of all creatures ; and he was consecrated unto God, that by him we might be consecrated and made holy, and that by him we might be accepted when we are offered unto the Lord. Again, observe Christ's flight into Egypt. Though the infancy is usually most quiet, yet here life and toil began together ; and see how speedily this comes after Christ's dedication unto God. Alas ! we are no sooner born again than we are persecuted. If the church travail, and bring forth a male, she is in danger of the dragon's streams. Again, observe Christ's return into Judea ; " He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel ;" with them alone he was personally to converse in his ministry, in which respect he was called a minister of the circumcision. And where should he be trained, and shew himself, but amongst them to whom God had sent him ? The gospel first began there, and as a preparation to it, Christ now in his childhood returns thither. Again, observe Christ disputing with the doctors in the temple. See how early his Divine graces put forth themselves ; " In him were hid," saith the apostle, " all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ;" all the treasures were hid in him, and yet some of those treasures appeared very early : his wisdom in his very infancy is wondered at, nor is it without our profit, for " of God he is made wisdom unto us." Again, observe how he spent the remainder of his youth. In all his examples he meant our instruction ; " He went down with his parents, and was subject to them :" he was not idly bred, but serves his generation in the poor way of a carpenter. " It is every way good for a man to bear God's yoke even from his infancy." Christ is inured betimes to the hardships of life, and the strict observation of the law, both of God and nature.

See, O my soul, what a world of matter is before thee : here is the annunciation of Jesus, the conception of Jesus,

the duplicity of natures in Jesus, the real distinction, the wonderful union, the nativity of Jesus, together with some consequents after it. Go over these with frequent thoughts; give not over till thou feelest thy heart warm. True meditation is as the bellows of the soul, that doth kindle and inflame holy affections; and by renewed thoughts, as by renewed, and stronger blasts, it doth renew and increase the flame.

### SECT. III. *Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us desire Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming, or incarnation. It is not enough to know, and consider, but we must desire. Now, what is desire, but "a certain motion of the appetite, by which the soul darts itself towards the absent good, purposely to draw near, and to unite itself thereunto?" The incarnation of Christ, according to the letter, was the desire of all nations. O, how they that lived before Christ, desired this coming of Christ! Abraham desired to see that day two thousand years, and more, before it came. It was the expectation of all the patriarchs. O when will that day come! And surely the incarnation of Christ in the fruit or application is, or should be, the desire of all Christians. There is virtue in Jesus Christ, in every circumstance concerning Christ, in his conception, incarnation; in his birth, and in those consequents of his birth. Now, to make these ours, that we may have our share and interest in them, we must here begin. O, my soul, do thou desire, do thou seek to possess thyself of Christ? Set thy desire (as the needle-point,) aright, and all the rest will follow. Never will union be with the absent good, but the soul, by desire, must first dart itself towards it. True it is, millions of souls stand at a distance from Christ, and why? they have no desire towards him. But, O that my soul, and thy soul, whosoever thou art that readest, would desire! O, that we could desire and long after him until we languish, and be compelled

to cry out with the spouse, "Comfort me, for I am sick of love."

Is there not good reason for it? What is there in Christ that is not desirable? View over all those excellencies of his conception; of his two natures really distinguished, and yet wonderfully united; of his birth; of those few consequents of his birth. But above all, see the fruit of all. He was conceived that our conceptions might be sanctified; he was the Son of Man, that he might suffer for us; and the Son of God, that he might satisfy Divine justice; he was God and man in one Person, that we might be one with him, "members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones." He was born of the virgin, that there might be a spiritual birth of Christ in our virgin hearts. Are not these desirable things? Never tell me of thy present enjoyments, for never was Christ so enjoyed in this life, but thou hast cause to desire more of Christ. It is worth thy observation, that "spiritual desires after Christ do neither load nor cloy the heart, but rather open, and enlarge it for more and more." Who was better acquainted with God than Moses? and yet who was more importunate to know him better? "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." And who was more acquainted with Christ than Paul? and yet who was more importunate to be with him nearer? "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ." Further and further union and communion with Christ, are most desirable things, and are not these the fruits of his incarnation, the effects of his personal union? More and more peace, and love, and reconciliation, betwixt God and us are desirable things: and are not these the fruits of Christ's birth? Was it not then that "righteousness looked down from heaven? that mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other?" An higher degree of holiness, likeness to God and Christ, are desirable things: and are not these the fruits of his circumcision, and presentation to the Lord, the effects of all those consequents that follow his birth? Come, stir up thy desires:

true desires are not wavering, but resolute and full of quickness. Observe how the nature of true desire in Scripture is set forth by the most strong similitudes of hunger and thirst ; and those not common neither, but by “ the panting of a tired hart after the rivers of water,” and by “ the gaping of dry ground after seasonable showers.” O, then ! how is it that thy desires are so contracted, and almost shut up ? Nay, how is it that thy vessels are so full of contrary qualities, that there is scarce any room in thy soul for Christ ? Will not the desires of the patriarchs witness against thee ? How cried they after Christ’s coming in the flesh ? “ Bow the heavens, O Lord, and come down,” Psal. cxliv. 5. “ O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down,” Isa. lxiv. 1. “ Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness, let the earth open, and bring forth salvation,” Isa. xlv. 8. Is it possible that their desires should be more vehement after Christ than ours ? They lived on the dark side of the cloud, but we on the bright side ; the veil was upon their hearts, which veil is done away in Christ. They saw Christ afar off, and their sight was very dim ; “ But we all with open face, as in a glass, behold the glory of the Lord.” One would think the less any thing is known, the less it should be desired. O, my soul, either thou art more ignorant of Christ than the patriarchs of old, or thy heart is more out of frame than theirs. Suspect the latter, and blame thy heart, it may be thy sluggish nature hath laid thy desires asleep. If an hungry man will sleep, his hunger will sleep with him. But, oh ! stir up and awake thy desires. Present before them that glorious object, the incarnation of Jesus Christ : it is an object which the very angels desire to look into, and art not thou more concerned in it than the angels ? Is not the fruit of the incarnation thine, more especially thine ? Come, then, stir up those motions of thy appetite, by which the soul darts itself toward the absent good. Draw nearer and nearer, till thou comest to union and enjoyment ; cry after

Christ, “Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?”

SECT. IV. *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming. Only here remember, I speak not of every hope, but only of such an hope as is grounded on some certainty and knowledge. This is the main question, Whether Christ’s incarnation belongs unto me? The prophet tells us, that “unto us a Child is born, and unto us a Son is given.” But how may I hope that this Child is born to me? and that this Son is given to me? What ground for that? Out of these words of the prophet I shall draw a double evidence, which may be instead of all: the first evidence from the former words, “Unto us a Child is born;” the second from the latter words, “Unto us a Son is given.”

1. From the former words I lay down this position, “Unto us a Child is born,” if we are new-born. The surest way to know our interest in the birth of Christ, is to know Christ born in us, or formed in us, as the apostle speaks. The new-birth is the effect of Christ’s birth, and a sure sign that Christ is born in us. Say then, O my soul, art thou born anew? Is there in thee a new nature, a new principle? Is the image of God and of Christ in thy soul? So the apostle styles it, “The bearing of the image of the heavenly;” then was Christ incarnate for thee. Come then, look to it, my soul. What is thy principle within? Consider not so much the outward actions, the outward duties of religion, as that root from whence they grow, that principle from whence they come. Are they fixed ones, settled ones by way of life in thee? Clocks have their motions, but they are not motions of life, because they have no principles of life within. Is there life within? Then art thou born again; yea, even “unto thee a child is born.” This is one evidence.

2. From the latter words I lay down this position, “Unto us a Son is given,” if we are God’s sons. The

best way to know our interest in the Son of God, is to know ourselves to be God's sons by grace, as Christ was God's Son by nature. Christians, to whom Christ is given, are co-heirs with Christ; only Christ is the first-born, and hath the pre-eminence in all things. Our sonship is an effect of Christ's sonship, and a sure sign that "unto us a Son is given. Say then, O my soul, art thou a son of God? Dost thou resemble God according to thy capacity, being holy, even as he is holy? Why then, Christ was incarnate for thee, he was given to thee. If thy sonship be not clear enough, thou by these following rules mayest try it further.

(1.) The sons of God fear God: "If I be a Father, where is mine honour?" (saith God,) "If I be a Master, where is my fear?" If I be a son of God, there will be an holy fear upon me in all my approaches unto God. I know there is a servile fear, and that is unworthy and unbeseeming a son of God; but there is a filial fear, and that is an excellent check and bridle to all our wantonness. What son will not fear the frowns of his loving father? I dare not do this, he will say, My father will be offended. Agreeable to this is the apostle's advice, "If ye call on the Father, pass your sojourning here in fear." (2.) The sons of God love God, and obey God out of a principle of love. Suppose there were no heaven to bestow upon a regenerate person, yet would he obey God out of a principle of love. Not that it is unlawful for the child of God to have an eye unto the recompence of reward. Moses' reason of esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, was, for that he had respect unto the recompence of reward. He had respect, in the original, he had a fixed intent eye. There was in him a love of the reward, and yet withall a love of God; and therefore his love of the reward was not mercenary. But this, I say, though there were no reward at all, a child of God hath such a principle of love within him, that for love's sake he would obey his God. He is led by the Spirit, and therefore he obeys. Now the Spirit that leads

him is a Spirit of love ; and “ as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.” (3.) The sons of God imitate God in his love and goodness to all men. Our Saviour amplifies this excellent property of God : “ He causeth his sun to shine upon good and evil.” And thence he concluded, “ Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Goodness to bad men is, as it were, the perfection of all. Oh ! my soul, canst thou imitate God in this ? Consider how thy Father bears it ; though the wicked provoke him day by day, yet for all that he doth not quickly revenge. God seeth all, and for all that he doth not make the earth presently to gape and devour us. He puts not out the glorious light of the sun, he doth not dissolve the work of creation, he doth not for man’s sin presently blast every thing into dust. What an excellent pattern is this for thee to write after ? Canst thou forgive thine enemies ? Do well to them that do evil to thee ? This is a sure sign of grace and sonship. It is related that some heathens, beating a Christian almost to death, asked him, What great matter did Christ ever do for him ? Even this, said the Christian, That I can forgive you, though you use me thus. Here was a child of God indeed. It is a sweet resemblance of our Father, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to “ love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good unto them that hate us, to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us.” Oh ! my soul, look to this, consult this ground of hope ; if this law be written in thy heart, write it down amongst the evidences that thou art God’s son ; yea, that even unto thee a Son is given.

To review the grounds : What ? Is a Child born to me ? and a Son given to me ? What ? Am I new born ? Am I indeed God’s son or daughter ? Do I upon search find in my soul new desires, new comforts, new contentments ? Are my words, my works, and affections, and conversation new ? Is there in me a new nature, a new principle ? Hath the Spirit given me a new power, a seed of spiritual life, which I had not before ? Do I upon search find that

I fear God, and love God, and imitate God in his love and goodness towards all men? Can I really forgive an enemy, and according to my ability do good unto them that do evil unto me? Why should I not then confidently and comfortably hope, that I have my interest in the birth of Christ, in the blessed incarnation and conception of Jesus Christ? Away, all despair and dejection. If these be my grounds of hope, it is time to hold up my head, and heart, and hands, and all with cheerfulness and confidence, and to say with the spouse, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine."

#### SECT. V. *Of believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming, or incarnation. I know many staggerings are oft in Christians, "What, is it likely that Christ should be incarnate for me? That God should do such a thing for such a sinful, abominable wretch as I am?" Ah! poor soul, put thy property in Christ's incarnation out of dispute, that thou mayest be able to say, "As God was manifest in the flesh, and I may not doubt it, so God is manifest in me, and I dare not deny it." To help thee in this, I shall first propose the hinderances of faith. 2. The helps of faith in this respect. 3. The manner how to exercise our faith. 4. The encouragements to bring on the soul to believe its part in the blessed incarnation of Jesus Christ.

1. For the first, there are but three things that can hinder faith: (1.) The exceeding unworthiness of the soul; and to this purpose are those complaints, "What! Christ incarnate for me? For such a dead dog as I am? I am less than the least of all God's mercies; I am fitter for hell and devils, than for union and communion with God and Christ; I dare not, I cannot believe." (2.) The infinite exactness of Divine justice, which must be satisfied. A soul deeply considering this, startles, and cries, "Oh! what will become of my soul? One of the least sins that

I stand guilty of deserves death, and eternal wrath, ‘ The wages of sin is death :’ and I cannot satisfy. Though I am indebted many millions of talents, I have not one mite to pay. Oh ! then, how should I believe ? What thoughts can I entertain of God’s mercy and love to me ? God’s law condemns me, my own conscience accuseth me, and justice must have its due.” (3.) The want of a Mediator, or some suitable person, which may stand between the sinner and God. “ If on my part there be unworthiness, and on God’s part severe justice ; and withal I see no Mediator which I may go unto, before I deal with the infinite glory of God himself, how should I but despair, and cry out, Oh ! wretched man that I am ! Oh ! that I never had been ! I cannot believe ; there is no room for faith in this case !”

2. The helps of faith in this sad condition, are these : (1.) A consideration that God is pleased to overlook the unworthiness of his poor creatures. This we see plainly in the very act of Christ’s incarnation ; himself despairs not to be as his poor creatures, to wear their flesh, to take upon him human nature ; and in all things to become like unto man, sin only excepted. (2.) A consideration that God satisfies justice, by setting up Christ, who is justice itself. Now was it that mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other ; now was it that free grace and merit ; that fulness and nothingness were made one ; now was it that truth ran to mercy and embraced her ; and righteousness to peace, and kissed her ; in Christ they met, yea, in him was the infinite exactness of God’s justice satisfied. A (3.) help is a consideration that God hath set up Christ as a Mediator : that he was incarnate in order to reconciliation with God, and the salvation of souls ; and but for the accomplishment of this design, Christ had never been incarnate. The very end of his uniting flesh unto him, was in order to the reconciliation of us poor sinners. Alas ! we had sinned, and by sin deserved everlasting damnation ; but to save us, and to satisfy himself, God takes our nature and joins

it to his Son, and calls that Christ a Saviour. This is the gospel notion of Christ ; for what is Christ, but God himself in our nature, transacting our peace ? In this Christ is fulness, and righteousness, and love, and bowels to receive the first acts of our faith ; and to have immediate union and communion with us. Indeed, we pitch not our faith immediately on God himself ; yet at last we come to him, and our faith lives in God, as one saith, before it is aware, through the intervention of that Person, which is God himself, only called by another name, the Lord Jesus Christ. And these are the helps of faith in reference to our unworthiness, God's justice, and the want of a Mediator betwixt God and us.

3. The manner how to exercise our faith on Christ incarnate, is this : (1.) Faith must directly go to Christ. We find indeed some particular promises of this and that grace. But the promises are not given without Christ. No ; first Christ, and then all other things. " Incline your ear, and come unto me." Come unto Christ, and then " I will make an everlasting covenant," (which contains all the promises,) " even the sure mercies of David." As in marriage, the woman first consents to have the man, and then all the benefits that follow ; so the soul by faith, first pitches upon Christ, and then on the privileges that flow from Christ. Say, dost thou want any temporal blessing ; suppose it be the payment of debts, thy daily bread, health, look through the Scripture for promises of these things, and let thy faith act thus, " If God hath given me Christ, the greatest blessing, then certainly he will give me all these things, so far as they may be for my good." In the 23d Psalm, we find a bundle of promises, but he begins, " The Lord is my Shepherd ; therefore I shall not want." The believing patriarchs, through faith, " subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions," did wonders in the world ; but what did they chiefly look to in their faith ? Surely to the promise to come, and to that better thing, Christ himself ; and therefore the apostle concludes, " having

such a cloud of witnesses," that thus lived and died by faith, " let us look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

(2.) Faith must directly go to Christ as God in our flesh. Some think it a carnal apprehension of Jesus Christ, to know him as in flesh. I confess to know him only so ; to consider Jesus in no other way but as having flesh, is no better than a carnal apprehension ; but to consider Christ as God in flesh, and to consider that flesh as inhabited by God, and filled with God, is a true and spiritual apprehension of Jesus Christ ; and hither is faith to be directed immediately. Suppose a case of danger by some enemies, and I find a promise of protection from my enemies ; I look on that ; but in the first place thus I argue, If the Lord hath given me Christ, (God in the flesh,) to save me from hell, then much more will he save me from these fleshly enemies.

(3.) Faith must go and lie at the feet of Christ ; faith must fasten itself on this God in our flesh. Some go to Christ, and look on Jesus with loose and transient glances, they have but coarse and common apprehensions of Jesus Christ. Oh ! but we should come to Christ with solemn and serious spirits ; we should look on Jesus piercingly, till we see him as God is in him, and as a Person thus and thus qualified from heaven : we should labour to apprehend what are the riches of this glorious mystery of Christ's incarnation ; we should dive into the depths of his glorious actings : we should study this mystery above all other studies : nothing is more pleasant, and nothing is more deep. That one Person should be God and man ; that blessedness should be made a curse ; that heaven should be let down into hell ; that the God of the world should shut himself up, as it were, in a body ; that the invisible God should be made visible to sense ; that God should make our nature, which had sinned against him, to be the great ordinance of reconciling us unto himself ; that God should take our flesh, and dwell in it with all his fulness, and make that flesh more glorious than the angels,

and advance that flesh into a oneness with himself, and through that flesh open all his rich discoveries of love and free grace unto the sons of men ; that this God-man should be our Saviour ; Redeemer, Reconciler, Father, Friend ; oh, what mysteries are these ! No wonder that when Christ was born, the apostle cries, “ We saw his glory, as of the only begotten Son of God ;” noting, that at the first sight of him, so much glory sparkled from him as could appear from none, but a God walking up and down the world. Oh ! my soul, let not such a treasury be unlooked into. Set faith on work with a redoubled strength. Surely we live not like men under this great design, if our eye of faith be not firmly and steadfastly set on this. Oh ! that we were but acquainted with these lively discoveries ! How blessedly might we “ live by the faith of the Son of God, who gave himself for us.”

(4.) Faith must look principally to the design of Christ, as God coming in the flesh. Now what was his design in this ? The apostle answers, Rom. viii. 3, “ God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh ;” i. e. God the Father sent into the world his only begotten Son, to abolish in the first place original sin. Mark these two words : “ He condemned sin in the flesh.” The first word *condemned*, is by a metonymy put for that which follows condemnation, namely for the abolishing of sin ; as condemned persons used to be cut off, and to be taken out of the world, that they may be no more ; so Christ hath condemned or abolished this sin. By the second word, *in the flesh*, is meant the human nature which Christ assumed. He abolished sin altogether in his own nature ; and that flesh of his being perfectly holy, and the holiness of it being imputed unto us, it takes away our guilt in respect of the impureness of our nature also. Christ had not the least spot of original sin ; and if we are Christ’s, then is the sin in some measure taken out of our hearts. But howsoever the filth of this sin may remain in part, yet the guilt is removed. In this respect the purity of Christ’s

human nature is no less reckoned to us for the curing of our defiled nature, than the sufferings of Christ are to us, for the remission of our actual sins. O, my soul, look to this end of Christ as God in the flesh. If thou consider him as made of flesh and blood, think withal, that the meaning of this was to condemn sin in our flesh. There flows from the holiness of Christ's nature such a power as countermands the power of our original sin, and acquits and discharges from the condemnation of the same sin. Not only the death and life, but also the conception and birth, of Christ, hath its influence in our justification.

4. The encouragement to bring on souls to believe on Christ incarnate, we may draw—(1.) From the excellency of this object. This incarnation of Christ is the foundation of all other actings of God for us ; it is the very hinge on which all turn ; it is the cabinet wherein all the designs of God do lie ; redemption, justification, glorification, all are wrapt up in it ; it is the highest pitch of the declaration of God's wisdom, goodness, power, and glory. Oh! what a sweet object of faith is this ! I know there are some other things in Christ which are most proper for procuring the pardon of actual sin ; and Christ rising from the dead is most proper for the evidencing of our justification ; but the strongest and purest acts of faith are those which take in Christ as such a Person, set forth in all his glory. Christ's incarnation is more general than Christ's passion, or Christ's resurrection, and, as some would have it, includes all. Christ's incarnation holds forth Christ in his fulness, and so is the complete subject of our faith. Come, then, poor soul, thy eyes are running to and fro in the world, to find comfort and happiness on earth ; O, cast thy eyes back, and see heaven and earth in one object ! Look fixedly on Christ incarnate ! There is more in this than in all the variety of this world, or of that world to come. Here is an object of faith, and love, and joy, and delight ; here is a compendium of all glories.

(2.) From the suitableness of this object. Christ incarnate is most suitable for our faith to act upon. We

are, indeed, to believe on God, but we cannot come to God but in and through Christ. Alas ! God is offended, and therefore we cannot find ground immediately to go to God. Hence you heard, that " faith must directly go to Christ as God in our flesh." Oh ! the infinite condescension of God in Christ ! God takes up our nature, and joins it to himself as one Person, and lays that before our faith ; so that here is God, and God suited to the particular state of the sinner. Now with what boldness may our souls draw nigh to God. Why art thou strange, poor soul ? Why standest thou afar off, as if it were death to draw nigh ! Of whom art thou afraid ? Is God come down amongst men, and canst thou not see him, lest thou die and perish ? Oh ! look once more, and be not discouraged ! See, God is not come down in fire. God is not descended in the armour of justice and everlasting burnings ; no, he is clothed with the garments of flesh, he desires to converse with thee after thy own form, he is come down to beseech thee to see with thine own eyes thy eternal happiness. Oh ! the wonder of heaven ! It is the cry of some poor souls, " Oh ! that I might see God !" Lo, here God is come down in the likeness of man, he walks in our own shape amongst us ; it is the cry of others, " O that I might have my heart united to God !" Why, he is come down for this very purpose, and hath united our nature unto himself. Surely God hath left all the world without excuse. Oh, that ever there should be an heart of unbelief, after these sensible demonstrations of Divine glory and love ! Why wilt thou now stand off ? Tell me, what wouldst thou have God to do more ? Can he manifest himself in a more suitable way to thy condition ? Is there any thing below flesh wherein the great God can humble himself for thy good ? Come, think of another and a better way, or else for ever believe. Me-thinks it is sad to see believers shy in their approaches to God, or doubtful of their acceptance with God, when God himself stoops first, and is so in love with our acquaintance, that he will be of the same nature that we are. Oh !

let not such a rock of strength be slighted, but every day entertain precious thoughts of Christ being incarnate. Inure thy heart to believing on this Jesus, as he carries on the great work of thy salvation at his first coming.

(3.) From the offers of this blessed object to our souls. As Christ is come in our nature to satisfy, so he comes in the gospel freely and fully to offer the terms of love ; therein are set out the most alluring expressions that possibly can be ; therein is set out, that this incarnation of Christ was God's own acting, out of his own love, and grace, and glory ; therein is set out the birth, and life, and death of Christ ; and this he could not do, but he must be incarnate : God takes our flesh, and he useth that as an instrument whereby to act ; he was flesh to suffer, as he was spirit to satisfy for our sins. Methinks I might challenge unbelief, and bid it come forth ; let it appear, if it dare, before this consideration. What, is not God incarnate, enough to satisfy thy conscience ? Come nigh, hear the voice of Christ inviting, “ Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden with sin.” And oh ! let these rich and glorious openings of the heart of Christ overcome thy heart. What, if God should have done no more than this ? Had he only looked down from heaven, and hearing sinners cry out, “ O wo, wo unto us for ever ! we have broken God's law, incurred the penalty, damned our own souls ; O who should deliver us ? Who will save us from the wrath to come ? ” In this case, if God, hearing sinners thus crying out, had, I say, only looked down and told them, “ I will pardon your sins ; I made the law, and will dispense with it ; fear not, I have the keys of life and death ; ” what soul would not have been raised up, even from the bottom of hell, at this very voice ? I know a poor soul would have scrupled at this, and have said, “ What then should become of infinite justice ? ” But, to remove all controversies, God hath not only spoken from heaven, but he himself is come down from heaven to speak unto us. O see this miracle of mercy ! God is come down in flesh, he is come down

as a price ; he himself will pay himself according to all the demands of his justice, and all this being done, now he offers and tenders himself to thy soul.

O, my soul, why shouldst thou fear to cast thyself upon thy God ? I know thy objection of vileness. Notwithstanding all thy vileness, God himself offers himself to thee by the hand ; and to remove all doubts, God himself hath put a price sufficient in the hands of justice ; or if yet thou fearest to come to God, why come then to thy own flesh ; go to Christ, as having thy own nature ; it is he that calls thee. What can be said more to draw on thy trembling heart ? If God himself, and God so fitted and qualified, as I may say, will not allure, must not men die and perish in unbelief ? What, O my soul, is God come down so low to thee ? And dost thou now stand questioning whether thou shouldst go or come to him ? What is this but to say, " All that God is, or does, or says, is too little to persuade me to faith ? " I cannot tell ; but one would think that unbelief should be strangled, quite slain, upon this consideration. All this, O my soul, thou hearest in the gospel ; there is Christ incarnate set forth to the life ; there is Christ suing thy love, and offering himself as thy Beloved in thy own nature ; there it is written, that God is come down in flesh, with an olive branch of eternal peace in his hand, and bids you all be witness, he is not come to destroy, but to save. Oh that this encouragement might be of force to improve Christ's glorious design to the supplying of all thy wants, and to the making up of all thy losses ! Believe, oh, believe thy part in Christ incarnate.

#### *Sect. VI. Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming, or incarnation. O, my soul, canst thou possibly light on any object more attractive than the incarnation of Jesus Christ ? If love be the loadstone of love, what an attractive is this before thee !

Methinks the very sight of Christ incarnate is enough to ravish thee with the apprehension of his infinite goodness. See how he calls out, or, as it were, draws out the soul to union, vision, and participation of his glory! O come, and yield up thyself unto him: give him thyself, and conform all thy affections and actions to his will. O, love him, not with a divided, but with all thy heart.

But to excite this love, I shall only propound the object, which will be argument enough. Love causeth love. Now, as God's first love to man was in making man like himself, so his second great love was in making himself like to man. Stay then awhile upon this love; for, I take it, this is the greater love of the two. The evangelist expresseth it thus, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" he gave him to be incarnate, to be made flesh, and to suffer death; but the extension of his love lies in that expression, "He so loved." So! how? why so fully, so freely, as no tongue can tell, no heart can think. It is usually said, that it is greater love in God to save a soul, than to make a world: and I think it was greater love in God to take our nature, than simply to save our souls. For a king to dispense with the law, and by his own prerogative to save a murderer from the gallows, is not such an act of love and mercy as to take the murderer's clothes, and to wear them as his richest livery? Why, God in taking our nature, hath done thus, and more than thus. He would not save us by his mere prerogative, but he takes our clothes, our flesh, and in that flesh he personates us, and in that flesh he will die for us, that we might not die, but live through him for evermore. Surely this was love, that God will be no more God, as it were, simply, but he will take up another nature, rather than the brightness of his glory shall undo our souls.

It will not be amiss, (whilst I am endeavouring to draw a line of God's love in Christ from first to last in saving souls,) that here we look back a little, and summarily

contrast the passages of love from that eternity before all worlds unto this present.

1. God had an eternal design to discover his infinite love to some besides himself. Oh, the wonder of this ! Was there any necessity of such a discovery ? Though God was one, and in that respect alone, yet God was not solitary ; in that eternity within his own essence there were three Divine Persons, and betwixt them there was a blessed communication of love. Though in that eternity there was no creature to whom these three Persons could communicate their love ; yet was there a glorious communication and breaking out of love from one to another. Before there was a world, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost did infinitely glorify themselves, John xvii. 5. What need then was there of the discovery of God's love to any one besides himself ? only thus was the pleasure of God ; " Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Such was the love of God, that it would not contain itself within that infinite ocean of himself, but it would needs have rivers and channels, into which it might run and overflow.

2. God, in prosecution of his design, creates a world of creatures ; some rational, and only capable of love ; others irrational, and serviceable to that one creature, which he makes the top of the whole creation ; then it was that he set one man, Adam, as a common person, to represent the rest ; to him he gives abundance of glorious qualifications, and him he sets over all the works of his hands. If we should view the excellency of this creature, either in the outward or inner man, who would not wonder ? His body had its excellency, which made the Psalmist say, " I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth," Psal. cxxxix. 14. It is a speech borrowed from those who work arras-work. The body of man is a piece of curious tapestry, consisting of skin, bones, muscles, sinews, and the like. What a goodly

thing the body of man was before the fall, may be guessed from the excellent gifts found in the bodies of some men since the fall. If all these were but joined in one, as certainly they were in Adam, what a rare body would such a one be? But what was his body in comparison of his soul? The soul was it that was especially made after the image of God; the soul was it that was tempered in the same mortar with the heavenly spirits. The soul was God's sparkle, a beam of his divine glory, a ray or emanation of God himself. As man was the principal part of the creation, so the soul was the principal part of man. Here was it that God's love and glory were centred. Here was it that God's love fixed itself in a special manner, whence flowed that communion of God with Adam, and that familiarity of Adam with God.

3. Within a while, this man, the object of God's love, fell away from God, and as he fell, so all that were in him, even the whole world, fell together with him; and hereupon God's face was hid. Not a sight of him but in flaming fire, ready to seize on the sons of men. And yet God's love would not thus leave the object of it. He had yet a further reach of love, and out of this dark cloud he lets fall some glimpses of another discovery. These glimpses were sweet; but, alas! they were so dark, that very few could make any comfortable application of them; but by degrees, God hints it out more; he points it out by types and shadows; he makes some model of it by outward ceremonies; and yet so dark, that, in four thousand years, men were but guessing and hoping through promises, for a manifestation of God's love. This is the meaning of the apostle, who tells us of "the mystery that was hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." This love of God was hid in the breast of God from the sons of men for ages, so that they knew not what to make of this great design. I speak of the generality of men; for in respect of some particulars, the Lord made his love clear to them; and still the nearer to Christ, the clearer and clearer was the covenant of grace.

4. At last, God fully opens himself ; in the fulness of time, God takes the flesh of these poor sinners which he had so loved, and joins it to himself, and calls it Christ a Saviour. Now was it that God descended, and lay in the womb of a virgin ; now it was that he was born as we are born ; now was it that he joined our flesh so nigh to himself, as that there is a communication of properties betwixt them both ; that being attributed to God which is proper to the flesh,—as to be born, to suffer ; and that being attributed to flesh which is proper to God,—as to create, to redcem. Who can choose but wonder, that God should be made flesh and dwell amongst us ? That flesh should infinitely provoke God, and yet God, in the same flesh, should be infinitely pleased ? That God should veil himself, and darken his glory with our flesh, and yet unveil at the same time the deepest and darkest of his designs in a comfortable way to our souls ? O my soul ! how shouldst thou contain thyself within thyself ? How shouldst thou but leap out of thyself, if I may so speak, as one that is lost in admiration of this love ? Surely God never manifested himself in such a strain of love as this before.

Well, hitherto we have followed the passages of his love, and now we see it at full sea. If any thing will beget our love to God, surely Christ incarnate will do it. Come then, O my soul, I cannot but call on thee to love thy Jesus ; and to provoke thy love, fix thy eye on this lovely object. Draw yet a little nearer ; consider what an heart of love is in this design : God is in thy own nature, to take upon him all the miseries of thy nature. Oh ! my heart, art thou yet cold in thy love to Jesus Christ ? Canst thou love him but a little, who hath loved thee so much ? How should I then but complain of thee to Christ ? And for thy sake beg hard of God, “ O thou sweet Jesus, that clothest thyself with the clouds as with a garment, and now clothest thyself with the nature of a man ; oh ! that nothing but thyself might be dear unto me, because it so pleased thec to debase thyself for my sake.”

SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation for us at his incarnation. If it be so, that by our desire, and hope, and faith, and love, we have reached the object which our souls pant after, how should we but joy and delight therein? The end of our motion is to attain quiet and rest. Now what is joy, but “a sweet and delightful tranquillity of mind, resting in the fruition of good?” What! hast thou in some measure attained the fruition of Christ, as God incarnate, in thy soul? It is then time to joy in Jesus; it is then time to keep a sabbath of thy thoughts, and to be quiet and calm in thy spirit. But thou wilt say, How should this be before we comé to heaven? I answer, There is not indeed perfection of joy whilst we are here, because there is no perfection of union on this side heaven; but so far as union is our joy must be. Examine the grounds of thy hope, and the actings of thy faith, and if thou art but satisfied in them, then lead up thy joy; here is matter for it to work upon: if thou canst rejoice in any thing, “rejoice in the Lord, and again, I say, rejoice.” Is there not cause? What is the meaning of the gospel of Christ? What is gospel, but *good spell*, or *good tidings*? And wherein lie the good tidings, according to their eminency? Is it not in the glorious incarnation of the Son of God? “Behold I bring you a gospel;” so it is in the original; or, “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” The birth of Christ is the comfort of comforts, and the sweetest balm that ever was. O, my soul, what ails thee? Why art thou cast down and disquieted within me? Is it because thou art a sinner? Why, “unto thee is born a Saviour;” his name is Saviour, and therefore Saviour because “he will save his people from their sins.” Come, then, and bring out thy sins, and weigh them to the utmost aggravaion, and take in every circumstance both

of law and gospel, and put but this in the other scale, that "unto thee is born a Saviour," surely all thy iniquities will seem lighter than vanity, yea, they will be as nothing in comparison thereof: "My soul doth magnify the Lord," said Mary, "and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour." Her soul and her spirit within her rejoiced at this birth of Christ. There is cause that every soul and every spirit should rejoice, that hath any interest in this birth of Christ. O, my soul, how shouldst thou but rejoice if thou wilt consider these particulars :

1. God himself is come down into the world. Because it was impossible for thee to come to him, he is come to thee. This consideration made the prophet cry out, "Rejoice greatly, O thou daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold, thy King cometh unto thee." He is called a King, and therefore he is able ; and he is thy King, and therefore he is willing. But in that "thy King cometh unto thee," is the marvellous love of God in Christ. Kings do not usually come to wait upon their subjects, it is well if poor subjects may come to them. Oh ! but see the great King of heaven and earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, stooping, and bowing the heavens to come down to thee ! Surely these are "good tidings of great joy," and therefore "rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion !"

2. God is come down in flesh. He hath laid aside, as it were, his own glory, whilst he converseth with thee. When God manifested himself on mount Sinai, he came down in thunder and lightning ; and if now he had appeared in thunder and lightning, if now he had been guarded with an innumerable company of angels, all having their swords of justice drawn, well might poor souls have trembled, and have run into corners ; for who could ever be able to endure his coming in this way ? But God is come down in flesh, he hath made his appearance as a man, as one of us ; and there is not in this regard the least distance betwixt him and us. Surely this is fuel for joy to feed upon. O why should God come down so

suitably, so condescendingly, as in our nature, if he would have thy poor soul to be afraid of him? Doth not this very design intend consolation to thy soul? O gather up thy spirit, anoint thy heart with the oil of gladness. See God himself is come down in flesh to live amongst us! He professeth he will have no other life but amongst the sons of men. See what a sweet way of familiarity and intercourse is made betwixt God and us.

3. God hath taken on him our nature, that his Godhead may flow out in all manner of sweetness upon our hearts. If God had come down in flesh only to have been seen of us, it had been a wonderful condescension: "If I have found favour in thy eyes," said Moses, "shew me thy way, that I may know thee." But to come in flesh, not only to be seen, but to despatch the great business of our souls' salvation, here is comfort indeed! With what joy should we draw water out of this well of salvation?

O my soul, thou art daily busy in eying this and that; but, above all, know, that the fulness of God is in Christ incarnate, to be emptied upon thee. This was the meaning of Christ's taking on him flesh, that through his flesh he might convey to thee whatsoever is in himself as God. As for instance, God in himself is good, and gracious, and powerful, and all-sufficient, and merciful, and what not? Now by his being in flesh, he conveys all this to thee. Observe this for thy eternal comfort; God in and through the flesh, makes all his attributes and glory serviceable to thy soul.

4. This discovering Christ incarnate is the first opening of all God's heart and glory unto the sons of men; and from this we may raise a world of comfort; for if God begins so gloriously, how will he end? If God be so full of love as to come down in flesh now into this world, oh! what matter of hope is laid up before us of what God will be to us in that world to come? If the glory of God be let out to our souls so fully at first, what glorious openings of all the glory of God will be let out to our souls

at last? Christians! what do you think will God do with us, or bring us unto, when we shall be with him in heaven? You see now he is manifested in flesh, and he hath laid out a world of glory in that: but the apostle tells us of another manifestation, for we "shall see him as he is." He shall at last be manifest in himself. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known."

O my soul, weigh all these passages, and make an application of them to thyself; and then tell me if yet thou hast not matter enough to raise up thy heart, and fill it with joy unspeakable and full of glory. When the wise men saw but the "star of Christ, they rejoiced with an exceeding great joy;" how much more when they saw Christ himself? "Your father Abraham, (said Christ to the Jews,) rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." He saw it indeed, but afar off, with the eyes of faith. They before Christ had the promise, but we see the performance; how then should we rejoice! how glad shouldst thou be, O my soul, at the sight of Christ's incarnation! If the angels of God, yea, if the multitudes of angels, could sing for joy at his birth, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards men;" how much more shouldst thou, whom it concerns more than the angels, join with them in consort, and sing for joy this joyful song of "Good-will towards men?" Awake, awake, O my soul! awake, awake, utter a song! tell over these passages, that God is come down into the world, that God is come down in flesh, that God is come down in flesh in order to thy reconciliation; that God is come down in the likeness of man, that he may bring thee up into the likeness of God; and that all these are but the first openings of the grace, and goodness, and glory of God in Christ unto thy soul; and oh! what work will these make in thy soul, if the Spirit come in, who is the Comforter?

†

SECT. VIII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus. Now this calling on Jesus contains prayer and praise. 1. We must pray that all these transactions of Jesus at his first coming may be ours ; and is not here encouragement for our prayers ? This very point of Christ's incarnation opens a door of rich entrance into the presence of God : we may call it a blessed portal into heaven. This is that " new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." With what boldness may we now enter into the holiest, and draw near unto the throne of grace ? Why, Christ is incarnate ; God is come down in the flesh ; though his deity may confound us, if we should immediately and solely apply ourselves unto it, yet his humanity comforts our faint and feeble souls. God in his humility animates our souls to come unto him, and to seek of him whatsoever is needful for us. Go then to Christ ; away, away, O my soul, to Jesus, or to God the Father in and through Jesus, and desire that the fruit, the benefit of his conception, birth, and of the wonderful union of the two natures of Christ, may be all thine. What ? dost thou hope in Jesus, and believe thy part in this incarnation of Christ ? Why then pray in hope, and pray in faith. What is prayer but the stream and river of faith, an issue of the desire of that which I joyfully believe ? " Thou, O Lord God of Hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee."

2. We must praise. This was the special duty practised by all saints and angels at Christ's birth : " Blessed be the Lord God of Israel," said Zachary, " for he hath visited and redeemed his people ;" — and, " Glory to God in the highest," said the heavenly host ; only one angel had before brought the news, — " Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ

the Lord; but immediately after there were many to sing praises; not only six cherubim, as Isaiah saw; not only four and twenty elders, as John saw; but a multitude of angels, like armies, that by their hallelujahs gave glory to God. O my soul, do thou keep consort with those angels: "O sing praises! sing praises." Never was the like case since the first creation; never was the wisdom, truth, justice, mercy, and goodness of God so manifest before. I shall never forget that last speech of a dying saint, "Blessed be God for Jesus Christ." O my soul, living and dying let this be thought on: what? Christ incarnate for me? Why, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name."

#### SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, in reference to this great transaction of his incarnation. Looking to Jesus is the cause of this; the sight of Christ; for as a looking-glass cannot be exposed to the sun but it will shine like the same, so God receives none to contemplate his face, but he transforms them into his own likeness; and Christ hath none that dive into these depths of his glorious incarnation, but they carry along with them sweet impressions of an abiding and transforming nature. Come, then, let us once more look on Jesus in his incarnation, that we may conform to Jesus in that respect.

But wherein lies this conformity to Jesus? I answer, in these and the like particulars: 1. Christ was conceived in Mary by the Holy Ghost; so must Christ be conceived in us by the same Holy Ghost. To this purpose is the seed of the word cast in, and principles of grace are by the Holy Ghost infused; "He hath begotten us by the word," saith the apostle, James i. 18. God hath appointed no other means to convey supernatural life but after this manner. Where no preaching is, there is a worse judgment than that of Egypt, where there was one dead in every family. By the Word and

Spirit the seeds of all grace are sown in the heart, and the heart closing with it, Christ is conceived in the heart.

2. Christ was sanctified in the virgin's womb ; so must we be sanctified in ourselves ; " Be ye holy as I am holy." Souls regenerate must be sanctified : " Every man," saith the apostle, " that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." I know our hearts are, as it were, seas of corruptions, yet we must daily cleanse them. Christ could not have been a Saviour for us, unless first he had been sanctified ; neither can we be fit members unto him, unless we be purged from our sins, and sanctified by his Spirit. To this purpose is that of the apostle ; " I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." In the Old Testament they did kill beasts, presenting them unto the Lord ; now we are to mortify the flesh, with the affections and lusts ; all our inordinate passions, all our evil affections of anger, love, joy, hatred, are to be crucified, and all that is ours must be given up to God ; there must be no love in us but of God, and in reference to God ; no joy in us, but in God, and in reference to God ; no fear in us but of God, and in reference to God ; and thus for all other the like passions. O that we would look to Jesus, and be like unto Jesus in this thing ! If there be any honour, any happiness, it is in this, we are not fit for any holy duty, or any religious approach unto God without sanctification. " This is the will of God," saith the apostle, " even your sanctification." All the commands of God tend to this ; and for the comfort of us Christians, we have under the gospel, promises of sanctification to be in a larger measure made out unto us : " In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses holiness unto the Lord ;"—yea, " every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord." Every vessel under Christ and the gospel must have written upon it, " Holiness to the Lord ;" thus our spiritual services, figured by the ancient ceremonial services, are set out by a larger measure of holiness than was in old time.

3. Christ, the Son of Man, is by nature the Son of God ; so we, poor sons of men, must, by grace, become the sons of God, even of the same God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ : “ For this end God sent his own Son, made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son ; and, if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” This intimates that what relation Christ hath unto the Father by nature, we should have the same by grace. By nature “ he is the only begotten Son of the Father. And as many as received him, (saith John,) to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

4. Christ, the Son of God, was yet the Son of Man ; there was in him a duplicity of natures really distinguished. And in this respect the greatest majesty, and the greatest humility that ever was, are found in Christ. So we, though sons of God, must remember ourselves to be but sons of men : our privileges are not so high, but our poor conditions, frailties, infirmities, sins, may make us low. Who was higher than the Son of God ? And who was lower than the Son of Man ? As he is God, he is in the bosom of his Father ; as he is man, he is in the womb of his mother ; as he is God, his throne is in heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity ; as he is man, he is circumcised in a manger. Well, “ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself.” He that thought it not robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself to become man. We should have found it no robbery to be equal with devils, and are we too proud to learn of God ? what an intolerable disproportion is this, to behold an humble God, and a proud man ! Shall the Son of God be thus humbled for us, and shall not we be humbled

for ourselves ? I say for ourselves, that deserve to be cast down among the lowest worms. What are we in our best condition on earth ? Had we the best natures, purest conversations, happiest endowments, pride overthrows all ; it thrust proud Nebuchadnezzar out of Babel, proud Saul out of his kingdom, proud Lucifer out of heaven. Poor man ! how ill it becomes thee to be proud, when God himself is become thus humble ! O "learn of me," saith Christ, "for I am meek and lowly in spirit, and you shall find rest unto your souls."

5. The two natures of Christ, though really distinguished, yet were inseparably joined; so must our natures, though at great distance from God, be inseparably joined to Christ, and thereby to God. "I pray," saith Christ, "that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." That union of Christ's two natures, we call an hypostatical union ; and this union of Christ with us, we call a mystical and spiritual union ; yet though it be mystical and spiritual, this hinders not but that it is a true, real union, whereby the believer is united to the Son of God. O what a privilege is this ! a poor believer, be he never so mean a man, or miserable in the eye of the world, yet is one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father : "Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." Every saint is Christ's fellow ; there is a kind of proportion between Christ and his saints in every thing ; if we take a view of all Christ, what he is in his person, in his glory, in his spirit, in his graces, in his Father's love, and in the access he hath to the Father, in all these we are, in a sort, fellows with Christ ; only with this difference, that Christ hath the pre-eminence in all things. All comes from the Father first to Christ ; Christ by his union hath all good things without measure, but we by our union with him have them only in measure, as it pleaseth him to distribute. But herein if we resemble Christ, whether in his union with the Father, or in his union of the two natures in the one person of a

Mediator; if by looking on Christ, we come to this likeness, to be one with Christ, Oh! what a privilege is this! Had we not good warrant for so high a challenge, it could be no less than a blasphemous arrogance to lay claim to the royal blood of heaven; but the Lord is pleased to dignify a poor worm, that every believer may truly say, "I am one with Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is one with me."

Nay, yet more, my sufferings are Christ's, Col. i. 24, and Christ's sufferings are mine, Rom. viii. 17. I am in Christ, an heir of glory, Rom. viii. 17. O my Christ, my life, what am I, or what is my Father's house, that thou shouldst come down into me! that thou shouldst be conceived in my poor sinful heart; that thou shouldst give my soul a new, a spiritual life, a life begun in grace, and ending in eternal glory? I shall not reckon up any more privileges of this union. Methinks I should not need. If I tell you of grace and glory, what can I more? Glory is the highest pitch, and Christ tells you concerning it, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." Ah, my brethren, to be so like Christ, as to be one with Christ, it is near indeed! O let us conform to Christ in this; he is one with our nature in an hypostatical, personal union; let us be one with him in a spiritual, holy, and mystical union. If God be not in our persons as truly, though not as fully as in our nature, we have no particular comfort from this design of his personal, hypostatical, and wonderful union.

6. When Christ was born, all Jerusalem was troubled. So when this new birth is, we must look that much commotion and much division of heart will be. The devil could not be cast out of the possessed person, but he would tear and torment him. We cannot expect that Christ should expel satan from the dominion he hath over us, but he will be sure to put us to great fear and terror. Besides, not only the evil spirit, but God's Spirit, is for awhile a Spirit of bondage. There are many pretenders

to the grace of God in Christ, but they cannot abide to hear of any pains in this new birth. Oh, this is legal ! But I pray thee tell me, dost thou know any woman bring forth in her sleep, or in a dream, without feeling any pain ? And how then should the heart of man be thus new changed and moulded without several pangs and troubles : "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children ;" so it is, and must be in our spiritual birth ; there is usually (I will not say always, to such or such a degree,) many pangs and troubles, there is many a throb, and many a heart-ache ere Christ can be formed in us.

7. Christ, after his birth, did and suffered many things in his childhood, so should we learn to bear God's yoke in our youth. O ye parents, do your duties, and in that respect imitate Joseph and Mary in their care of the holy child Jesus ; and O ye children, do your duties, and imitate Jesus, the blessedest pattern that ever was, that as you grow in stature, you also might grow in favour with God and man.

Thus far we have looked on Jesus as our Jesus in his incarnation. Our next work is to look on Jesus carrying on the great work of man's salvation during his life, from John's baptism until his dying on the cross.

# LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS LIFE.

---

## THE FOURTH BOOK.

---

### 1 JOHN I. 2.

For the life was manifested, and we have seen it.

---

### CHAP. I.

#### SECT. I. *Of the Beginning of the Gospel.*

IN this piece, as in the former, we must first lay down the object, and then direct you how to look to it. The object is Jesus carrying on the work of man's salvation during the time of his life. Now in all the transactions of this time, we shall observe them as they were carried on successively in those three years and an half of his ministerial office.

For the first year, the evangelist Mark begins thus : “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ;” *q. d.* the beginning of that age of the world which the prophets pointed out for the time of good things to come ; or the beginning of the completion of that gospel, which, in respect of the promise, was from

the beginning of the world. That the beginning of the gospel was now, appears, in that baptism (which was only used among the Jews for the admission of heathens to their church,) is now proposed to the Jews themselves; shewing, that now they were to be transplanted into a new profession; that the Gentiles and they were now to be knit into one church and body. Indeed the doctrine of John was of a different strain, from the literal doctrine of the law, in the sense of the Jews, for that called all for works; "Do this and live." But John called for repentance, and for the renewing of the mind, and for belief in him, that was coming after, disclaiming all righteousness by the works of the law. Hence one observes that the evangelist Luke points out this year in a special manner; it was the "fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar; at which time, (said he,) Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, Philip was tetrarch of Iturea, Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas were high priests. And then, even then, the word of God came unto John, the Son of Zacharias, in the wilderness." See how exact the evangelist is, that so remarkable a year of the beginning of the gospel might be made known to all the world. I shall begin the first year of Christ's life with the beginning of John's preaching, which was six months current before the ministry of Christ.

## SECT. II. *Of the preaching of John the Baptist.*

Now was it that the gospel began to dawn, and John, like the morning-star, springing from the windows of the east, foretels the approach of the Sun of Righteousness. Now was it that he laid the first rough stone of the building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections. I read not that ever John wrought a miracle, but good works convince more than miracles themselves. To this purpose, I suppose, John the Baptist spent his time in prayer, meditation, and col-

loquies with God, eating locusts and wild honey in the wilderness, that he might be made a fit instrument of preparation of the gospel of Christ.

John's sermons were to those of Jesus as a preface to a discourse. His usual note was repentance, the axe to the root, the fan to the floor, the chaff to the fire. As his raiment was rough, so was his tongue ; and thus must the way be made for Christ into obstinate hearts. Pleasing of the flesh is no fit preface to regeneration. If the heart of man had continued upright, Christ might have been entertained without contradiction ; but now violence must be offered to our corruptions, ere we can make room for grace. If the great way-maker do not cast down hills, and raise up vallies in the bosoms of men, there is no passage for Christ ; never will Christ come into that soul, where the herald of repentance, either in one motive or other, hath not been before him.

Shall we hear that sermon that John preached in his own words ? "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." These are the words when he first began to preach the gospel of Christ ; and indeed we find Christ himself doth preach the same doctrine in the same words, "Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent ; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Oh ! how seasonable is this sermon to Christians ! Hath not the kingdom of heaven approached unto us ? Take the kingdom of heaven for the kingdom of glory, are we not near to the door of glory, to the confines of eternity ? "What is our life but a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and after it vanisheth away ?" We know not but ere the sun has run one round, our souls may be in that world of souls, and so either in heaven or hell. Or take the kingdom of heaven for the church of Christ, and what expectation have we now of the flourishing state of Christ's church here upon earth ? "Then shall the children of Israel and Judah be gathered together,—for great shall be the day of Jezreel," Hos. i. 11. A time is at hand, that Israel and Judah shall be called together, that

the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in; and what is this but the great day of Jezreel? Then what manner of persons ought we to be? How spiritual? how heavenly-minded? "Arise, arise, shake off thy dust, for thy light is coming, and the glory of the Lord is rising upon thee." But I will not dwell on this: my design is to consider Jesus, and of the transactions of Jesus in reference to our souls' health. Now John's sermons were only a preparative to the manifestation of Jesus.

### SECT. III. *Of the Baptism of Jesus.*

He that formerly was circumcised, would now be baptized. He was circumcised to sanctify his church that was, and he was baptized to sanctify his church that should be: we find him in both testaments opening a way into heaven. This was the first appearing of Christ in reference to his ministerial office. He that lay hid in the counsel of God from all eternity, and that lay hid in the womb of his mother for the space of forty weeks, and that lay hid in Nazareth for the space of thirty years, now at last begins to shew himself to the world: "He comes from Galilee to Jordan, to John, to be baptized of him." Now was the full time come that Jesus should take his leave of his mother, and his trade, to begin his Father's work, in order to the redemption of the world. For the clearer understanding of Christ's baptism, we shall examine, 1. What reason Christ had to be baptized? 2. How it was that John knew him to be Christ. And, 3. Why it was that the Holy Ghost descended on him.

1. What reason had Christ to be baptized? We find John himself wondered at this: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Many reasons are given for Christ's baptism: 1. That he might bear witness to the preaching and baptism of John, and might reciprocally receive a testimony from John. 2. That by his own baptism he might sanctify the water of baptism to his own church. 3. That he might "fulfil all righteousness;" not only moral, but figurative, ceremonial,

and typical. Some think, that the ceremony, which our Saviour looked at in these words, was their washing of the priests in water, when they entered into their function: "Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water." And surely this was the main reason of Christ's being baptized, that by this baptism he might be installed in the ministerial office.

2. How did John know him to be Christ? The Baptist speaks expressly, "I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, On whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Now this descent of the Holy Ghost was not till after baptism; how then did he know him to be Christ? To this it may be answered, it is not unlikely that John knew Christ at his first arrival by revelation. Thus Samuel knew Saul; and thus John might know Christ. That knowledge he had after Christ's baptism, was a further confirmation of the knowledge he had before his baptism, and that not so much for his own sake, as for the people's; "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

3. Why was it that the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus? I answer, for these reasons, 1. That John the Baptist might be satisfied; for this token was given John, when he first began to preach, "That upon whom he should see the Spirit of God descending and remaining on him, the same was he who should baptize with the Holy Ghost." 2. That Christ himself might be anointed to his function: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." As Aaron and his sons were anointed with material oil, when they entered into their offices, so Christ was, by the Spirit (as it were,) anointed, that so he might receive this consecration and institution for the office that he was to enter on, viz. the preaching and ministry of the gospel.

4. Why in the form of a dove, rather than some other form? Perhaps, 1. To shew Christ's innocence, purity, and love. 2. To answer the figure in Noah's flood; for as a dove at that time brought tidings of the abating of the waters, so now it brings tidings of the abating of God's wrath upon the preaching of the gospel.

Observe, the baptism we use, and the baptism of John, are in nature and substance one and the same. 1. John "preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." They have therefore the same doctrine, and the same promise. 2. The baptism ministered by John pertained to the "fulfilling of all righteousness." And Luke testifies, that the publicans and people being baptized of John, they "justified God. But the Pharisees rejected the counsel of God against themselves, and were not baptized." Only herein lies the difference, that John baptized in Christ that should die and rise again; but we baptize in the name of Christ that hath died, and risen again. It is a difference in respect of circumstance, but not of the substance. Oh! take heed of throwing away the baptism of water, upon the pretence of baptism only with fire! Christ (we see) hath joined them together, and let no man separate them asunder: Christ himself was baptized with fire; and yet Christ himself was baptized with water.

#### SECT. IV *Of the Fasting and Temptation of Christ.*

No sooner is Christ come out of the water of baptism, but he enters into the fire of temptation. No sooner is the Holy Spirit descended upon his head, but he is led by the same Holy Spirit to be tempted in the wilderness. No sooner doth God say, "This my Son;" but satan puts it to the question, "If thou be the Son of God?" All these are but Christ's preparatives to his prophetical office. In the former, Christ was prepared by a solemn consecration; now he is further prepared by satan's temptation. In the same method as the evangelist lays it down, Matt. iv. 1—12, I shall proceed. "Then was

Jesus led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." In the whole, we may observe these several branches: First, the place where the temptation was, the wilderness; Secondly, the cause of Christ's going into the wilderness, the Spirit's leading; Thirdly, the end of the Spirit's leading Christ into the wilderness, "to be tempted of the devil;" Fourthly, the time and occasion of the devil's onset, at the end of forty days fast, and "when he was an hungered;" Fifthly, the temptations themselves, which are in number three; to which are added as many victories, which Christ had over the tempter; who therefore "left him, and so the angels came, and ministered unto him." I shall begin first with the place where the temptation was; to wit, in the wilderness.

This wilderness was not that same wilderness wherein John the Baptist lived, Matt. iii. 1; for that wherein John lived was a place inhabited. There were in that place cities and towns, and a number of people, to whom John preached; but this wilderness was devoid of men, full of wild beasts. So saith Mark, "He was tempted of satan, and was with the wild beasts." As Adam, in his innocence lived with wild beasts, and they hurt him not: so Christ, the second Adam lives here in a wilderness with wild beasts, and has no hurt at all. He is Adam-like in his safety and security; above Adam in the resisting of temptations. Probably, during his forty days abode here, Christ was continually exercised in prayer and fasting; for he knew he had the great work of redemption to promote; and therefore his conversation for this interval must have been preparatory to it: in this respect, I know not but the wilderness might be an advantage to Christ's design. In this solitary place he could not but breathe out more pure inspiration. Heaven usually is more open, and God usually is more familiar in his visits in such places.

2. The cause of Christ's going into the wilderness was the Spirit's leading: "Then was Jesus led of the Spirit

into the wilderness." Christ was led by the good Spirit, to be tempted by the evil spirit. O wonder! that same Spirit which was one with the Father and the Son: that same Spirit whereby Christ was conceived, now drives him or leads him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Christ himself would not go into the combat uncalled, unwarranted; how then should we poor weaklings presume upon any abilities of our own? Who dares grapple with the devil in his own strength? Oh! take heed! If we are to pray not to be led into temptation, much more are we to pray not to run into temptation before we are led; and yet for the comfort of God's people, if it be so that we are led; if by Divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are engaged in an action, or in a course of life that is full of temptations, let us look upon it as an issue of Divine providence in which we must glorify God.

3. The end of the Spirit's leading Christ into the wilderness was either immediate or remote. The immediate end was, "to be tempted of the devil." To this purpose was Christ brought thither, that satan might tempt him. One would think it a very strange design that the Son of God should be brought into a wilderness to be set on by all the devils in hell; but in this also, God had another remote end, *i. e.* his own glory and our good. 1. His own glory appeared in this; had not satan tempted Christ, how should Christ have overcome satan? Herein was the power of Christ exceedingly manifested; the devil having the chain let loose, assaults Christ with all his might; and Christ both overcomes him, and triumphs over him. And herein were the graces of Christ exceedingly manifested. How was the faith, patience, humility, zeal, and valour of Christ set forth, which they could not have been, if he had always lain quietly in garrison, and never had come into the skirmish? 2. As it was for his glory, so also for our good. Now we see what manner of adversary we have, how he fights, and how he is resisted, and how overcome; now we see the dearer we

are to God, the more obnoxious we are to temptation. Now we see that the best of saints may be tempted or allured to the worst of evils, since Christ himself is solicited to infidelity, covetousness, and idolatry: now we see that “we have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but such a one as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin; and therefore we may go boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace in time of need.”

4. The time and occasion of the devil's onset; it was at the end of forty days' fast, and when he was an hungered. Moses fasted forty days at the delivery of the law; and Elias fasted forty days at the restitution of the law; and to fulfil the time of both these types, Christ thinks it fit to fast forty days at the accomplishment of the law, and the promulgation of the gospel. In fasting so long, Christ manifests his almighty power; and in fasting no longer, Christ manifests the truth of his manhood, and of his weakness; to shew that he was man as well as God, and so a fit Mediator betwixt God and man, he would both feed and fast; make use of the creature, and withal suffer hunger.—And now our Saviour is an hungered. This gives occasion to satan to set upon him with his fierce temptations. He knows well what baits to fish withal, and when, and how to lay them. He considers the temper and constitution of the person he is to tempt. And he observes all exterior accidents, occasions, and opportunities.

5. The temptations themselves are in number three; whereof the first was this: “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” What an horrible entrance is this: “If thou be the Son of God?” No question, satan had heard the glad tidings of the angel, he saw the star, and the journey, and the offerings of the sages, he could not but take notice of the gratulations of Zachary, Simeon, Anna. And of late, he saw the heavens open, and heard the voice that came down

from heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And yet, now that he saw Christ fainting with hunger, as not comprehending how infirmities could consist with a Godhead, he puts it to the question, "If thou be the Son of God." Here is a point in which lies all our happiness. How miserable were we, if Christ were not indeed the Son of God? Satan strikes at the root of this supposition. Surely, all the work of our redemption, and all the work of our salvation depend upon this, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. If Christ had not been the Son of God, how should he have ransomed the world? How should he have done, or how should he have suffered that which was satisfactory to his Father's wrath? If Christ be not the Son of God, we are all undone, we are lost, we are damned for ever. Farewell glory, farewell happiness, farewell heaven. If Christ be not the Son of God, we must never come there. Well, satan, thou beginnest thy assault like a devil indeed. "If thou be the Son of God;" but what then? "Command that these stones may be made bread." He knew Jesus was hungry; and therefore he invites him to eat bread only of his own providing, that so he might refresh his humanity, and prove his Divinity. There is nothing more ordinary with our spiritual enemy, than by occasion of want, to move us to unwarrantable courses; "If thou art poor, then steal: if thou canst not rise by honest means, then use indirect means." I know Christ might as lawfully have turned stones into bread, as he turned water into wine; but to do this in a distrust of his Father's providence, to work a miracle of satan's choice, and at satan's bidding, it could not agree with his being the Son of God. And hence Jesus refuseth to be relieved. He would rather deny to manifest the Divinity of his person, than he would do any act which had in it the intimation of a different Spirit. O Christians! it is a sinful care, to take evil courses to provide for our necessities. Come, it may be thou hast found a way to thrive, which thou couldst not do before. O take heed; was it not of the

devil's prompting, to change stones into bread ? Sadness into sensual comforts ? If so, then satan hath prevailed. Alas, he cannot endure thou shouldst live a life of austerity, or self-denial, or mortification ; if he can but get thee to satisfy thy senses, and to please thy natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle. It were a thousand times better for us to make stones our meat, and tears our drink, than to swim in ill-gotten goods, and in the fulness of voluptuousness.

6. But what was Christ's answer ? "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." 1. "It is written." He easily could have confounded satan by the power of his Godhead ; but he rather chooses to vanquish him by the sword of the Spirit. Surely this was for our instruction. By this means he teacheth us how to resist, and to overcome. Nothing in heaven or earth can beat the forces of hell, if the Word of God cannot do it : O then, how should we pray with David, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and take not from me the words of truth, let them be my songs in the house of my pilgrimage —so shall I make answer to my blasphemers." 2. "Man shall not live by bread alone." Whilst we are in God's work, God hath made a promise of the supply of all provisions necessary for us. Jesus was now in his Father's work, therefore he was sure to be provided for according to God's word. Christians ! are we in God's service ? God will certainly give us bread ; and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises, "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body and of the spirit. I remember one kept straitly in prison, and sorely threatened with famine ; he replied, "That if he must have no bread, God would so provide that he should have no stomach." If our stock be spent, God can lessen our

necessities : if a tyrant will take away our meat, God our Father knows how to alter our faint, and feeble, and hungry appetites.

The second temptation is not so sensual. The devil sees that he was too low for Christ, and therefore he comes again with a temptation something more spiritual ; “ He sets him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee.” He that was content to be led from Jordan into the wilderness, yields to be led from the wilderness to Jerusalem. The wilderness was fit for a temptation arising from want, and Jerusalem for a temptation arising from vain-glory. Methinks it is a sweet contemplation of an holy divine ; he supposeth as if he had seen Christ on the highest battlements of the temple, and satan standing by him with this speech in his mouth : “ Well, then, since in the matter of nourishment thou wilt needs depend upon thy Father’s providence ; take now a further trial of that providence, in thy miraculous preservation : Cast down thyself from this height ; and if thou be the Son of God, now the eyes of all men are fixed upon thee, there cannot be devised a more ready way to spread thy glory : and for danger, if thou be the Son of God, there can be none : what can hurt him that is the Son of God ? ” Come, cast thyself down, saith satan. But why did not satan cast him down ? He carried him up thither ; and was it not more easy to throw him down thence ? O no, the devil may persuade us to a fall, but he cannot precipitate us without our own act ; his malice is infinite, but his power is limited ; he cannot do us any harm, but by persuading us to do it ourselves ; and therefore saith he to Christ, “ Cast thyself down.” To this Christ answers, “ Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Though it is true, that God must be trusted in, yet he must not be tempted ; if means be allowed, we must not throw them away upon a pretence of God’s protection. Christ

knew well enough that there were ordinary descents by stairs from the top of the temple, and therefore he would not so tempt God to throw himself headlong. All the devils in hell could not so tempt Christ as to make him tempt his God.

The third temptation is yet more horrid ; the temple was not high enough, so that satan takes him up to the top of an " exceeding high mountain, and shews him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, saying, All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." In this temptation the devil, by an angelical power, drew into one centre all the kingdoms and glories of the world, and made an admirable map of beauties, and represented them to the eyes of Jesus. He thought ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that which prevailed upon himself, and therefore, " Come," saith satan, " all these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." How ? God worship the devil ? Was ever the like blasphemy since the creation ? The Lamb of God, that heard all the former with patience, could by no means endure this : he commands him away, and tells him, " It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Now was the devil put to flight, and in his stead the angels came and ministered unto Jesus, *i.e.* after his fast they minister such things as his necessities required.

O Christians ! what shall we say to this ? If Christ was thus tempted by satan, what may we look for ? Sometimes it cheers my heart to think that Christ was tempted, because thereby he knows how to succour those that are tempted ; and sometimes it affrights my soul to think that satan durst be so bold with Jesus Christ. Oh what may he do with me ! how easily may he prevail against my soul ! When he came to tempt Christ, he found nothing in him to join with him in the temptation, but in my heart is a world of corruptions, and unless the Lord prevent, I am quickly gone.

SECT. V. *Of the first Manifestation of Christ.*

To manifest Christ were many witnesses. As, 1. From heaven the Father is witness: for see, saith Christ, "the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me;" and the Son is witness; for so saith Christ, "I am one that bear witness of myself;" and "though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go;" and the Holy Ghost is a witness; so saith Paul, "The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us;" and to that purpose he descended like a dove, and lighted upon him. 2. On earth John the Baptist is witness; for so saith Christ, "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; he came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through Christ might believe." No sooner was John confirmed by a sign from heaven that Jesus was the Christ, but he immediately manifested it to the Jews, and first to the priests and Levites sent from the Sanhedrim; and secondly, to all the people he professed, wheresoever he saw Jesus Christ, "This is he;" yea, he points him out with his finger, "Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world." Then he shews him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and then to another disciple with him, "who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night." Andrew brings his brother Simon with him. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip finds out Nathanael, and bids him come and see, for the Messiah was found. Thus we see no less than five disciples found out at first, which must be so many witnesses of Jesus Christ.

And yet we find more witnesses: "The works," saith Christ, "that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." These works or miracles of Christ were many; but because we are speaking of his first manifestation, I shall instance only in his first work, which was at a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The power of miracles had now ceased since their return out of captivity; the

last miracle that was done by man till this very time, was Daniel's tying up the mouths of the lions ; and now Christ begins. He that made the first marriage in paradise, bestows his first miracle upon a marriage-feast. O happy feast, where Christ is a guest ! I believe this was no rich or sumptuous bridal. Who ever found Christ at the magnificent feasts or triumphs of the great ? The poor bridegroom wants drink for his guests ; and as soon as the holy virgin hath notice of it, she complains to her Son : whether we want bread, or wine, necessaries, or comforts, whither should we go but to Christ ? " But Jesus answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee ? Mine hour is not yet come." This shows, that the work he was to do must not be done to satisfy her importunity, but to prosecute the great work. In works spiritual and religious, all outward relation ceaseth : matters of miracle concerned the Godhead only ; and in this case, " O woman, what have I to do with thee ?" We must not deny love and duty to relations ; but in the things of God, natural endearments must pass into spiritual ; and like stars in the presence of the sun, must not appear. Paul could say, " Henceforth know we no man after the flesh ; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

At the command of Jesus, the water-pots were filled with water, and the water by his Divine power is turned into wine ; where the different dispensation of God and the world is highly observable : " Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse." But Christ not only turns water into wine, but into such wine as at the last draught is most pleasant. These were the first manifestations of Jesus. You see he had several witnesses to set him forth ; some from heaven, and some on earth. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost witness from heaven. The Baptist, disciples, and his works witness on earth ; and there is no disagreement in their witness, but all bring in this testimony of Jesus, That he is the Messiah ; " that is, being interpreted, the Christ."

But what are those manifestations to us? or to that great design of Christ in carrying on our souls' salvation? Much every way. For either must Christ be manifested to us even by these witnesses, in the preaching of the gospel, and manifested in us by that one witness, his Holy Spirit, or we are undone for ever. 1. Christ must be manifested to us in the preaching of the gospel. This mercy we have this day; nay, you see every Sabbath-day all the witnesses speak in us. What do we, but in God's stead, in the Baptist's stead, in the disciples' stead, manifest Christ to you in every sermon? It is the commission which Christ hath given us of the ministry; "Go, preach the gospel to every creature." 2. Christ must be manifested in us by his Holy Spirit. Christians! look to your hearts; what manifestations of Christ are there? When Paul speaks of the gospel in general, he adds in particular, that "it pleased God to reveal Christ in me." And when Peter speaks of the word of God, he adds, that "we take heed thereunto, until the day dawn, and the Day-star" (that is, Christ, Rev. xxii. 16,) "arise in our hearts;" till then, though we be circled with gospel discoveries, our hearts will be full of darkness; but when Christ, whom the prophet calls "the Sun of Righteousness," and Peter the "Day-Star," shall arise within us, we shall be full of light.

*Sect. VI. Of Christ's whipping the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple.*

Concerning Christ's whipping the buyers and sellers out of the temple, we read in the gospel, that "the Jews' passover being at hand, Jesus went up to Jerusalem." Thither, if we follow him, the first place that we find him in is the temple; where, by the occasion of the national assembly, was an opportune scene for Christ's transactions. In that temple Christ first espies a mart; there were divers merchants and exchangers of money, that brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice against that

great solemnity ; at the sight of which, Jesus, being moved with indignation, makes a whip of cords, and drives them all out of the temple, overthrows the accounting tables, and commands them that sold doves, to take them from thence.

Sometimes I wonder at the irreverent carriage of some hearers, laughing, talking, prating, sleeping, in our congregations. What ! is this a demeanor befitting the presence of Christ ? Wouldst thou carry thyself thus in the presence of a prince, or of some earthly majesty ? " If thou goest but into a king's palace," (as Chrysostom speaks,) " thou compostest thyself to a comeliness in thy habit, look, gait, and all thy guise, and dost thou laugh ? " I may add, dost thou any way carry thyself indecently in God's presence ? Some there are whom, in the very midst of ordinances, the devil usually rocks asleep. But, O ! dost thou not fear that thy damnation sleeps not ? How justly might Christ come against thee in his wrath, and whip thee out of the temple into hell ? Surely we should do well to behave ourselves in such a presence with the thoughts of heaven about us ; our business here is an errand of religion, and God himself is the object of our worship : how then should our actions bear at least some degrees of proportion to God and Christ ?

And now was the first passover after Christ's baptism. This was the first year of Christ's ministry ; whereof the one half was carried on by his fore-runner, John the Baptist ; and the other half (betwixt his baptism and this first passover,) was carried on by himself. And now hath Christ three years to his death. I shall come on to the second year, and to his actings therein in reference to our salvation.

## CHAP. II.

### SECT. I. *Of the second Year of Christ's Ministry.*

Now was it that the office of the Baptist was expired ; and Christ, beginning his prophetical office, appears like

the sun in succession of the morning-star ; he preacheth the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance : “ Repent ye, and believe the gospel,” Mark i. 15. Now, what this gospel was, the sum and series of all his following sermons expressed.

By this time Jesus saw it convenient to choose more disciples. With this family he goes up and down Galilee, “ preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of diseases.” It is not my purpose to enlarge on all the sermons, miracles, or colloquies of Christ with men. In this year therefore I shall limit myself to the consideration of Christ in these two particulars. 1. His preaching. 2. His miracles : both these relate to the exercise of his prophetical office.

## SECT. II. *Of Christ's Sermons this Year.*

1. His preaching this year was frequent ; and, amongst others, now it was that he delivered the first sermon, “ Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” 2. Now was it that he delivered that spiritual and mystical sermon of regeneration, at which Nicodemus wonders ; “ How can a man be born when he is old ? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born ?” But Jesus takes off the wonder, in telling him, this was not a work of flesh and blood, but of the Spirit of God ; for “ the Spirit bloweth where it listeth,” and is as the wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and manner of production. 3. Now was it that the throng of auditors forced Christ to leave the shore. Whilst he was upon land, he healed the sick bodies by his touch ; and now he was upon sea, he cured the sick souls by his doctrine : He that made both sea and land, caused both to conspire to the doing good to the souls and bodies of men. 4. Now it was that he preached that blessed sermon on that text, “ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.” No question but he preached both to poor and rich ; Christ

preached to all ; but for the power and fruit of his preaching, it was only received by the poor in spirit. In the following particulars, his office is set out still in an higher tenor, "To heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind;" or, as it is in Isaiah lxi. 1, "The opening of the prison to them that are bound." A sad thing to be in captivity, but sadder to be bound in chains, or locked up in a prison there ; but it is most sad of all to be imprisoned, having one's eyes put out, as was the case of Sampson and Zedekiah. Now the evangelist, willing to render the prophet to the highest sense that might be, useth an expression that meets with the highest mystery ; that is, when a man is not only shut up in a prison, but himself also hath his eyes put out ; to such Christ should preach not only deliverance to the captives, but also "recovering of sight to blinded persons." 5. Now it was that he delivered the admirable sermon, called the sermon upon the mount. It is a breviary of all those precepts which are truly called Christian ; it contains in it all the moral precepts given by Moses, and a more severe exposition than the scribes and pharisees had given ; it holds forth the doctrines of meekness, poverty of spirit, Christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and patience, and suffering of injuries : he teacheth us how to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, how to contemn the world, and how to seek the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness.

And thus Christ, being entered upon his prophetical office, in these and the rest of his sermons, gives a clear testimony that he was not only an interpreter of the law, but a Law-giver ; and that this law of Christ might retain some proportion, at least, to the law of Moses, Christ, in his last sermon, went up unto a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. I cannot stand to paraphrase on this, or any other of his sermons ; but seeing now we find Christ in the exercise of his prophetical office, let us observe 1. his titles in this respect. 2. The

reasons of his being a prophet. 3. The excellency of Christ above all other prophets.

### Sect. III. *Of Christ's prophetical Office.*

First. The titles of Christ, in respect of his prophetical office, were these, 1. Sometimes he is called Doctor, or Master; "Be ye not called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ." The word is Καθηγητης, which signifies a doctor, moderator, teaching-master, a guide of the way. 2. Sometimes he is called a Law-giver; "There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy." The apostle speaks of the internal government of the conscience; in which case the Lord is our Judge. 3. Sometimes he is called a Counsellor; and "his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor;" "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom," saith Christ. "I am understanding, and I have strength." 4. Sometimes he is called the apostle of our profession; "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." God sent him as an Ambassador, to make known his will; he came not unsent: the very word imports a mission, a sending; "How shall they preach except they be sent?" 5. Sometimes he is called the Angel of the Covenant; "Even the Angel of the Covenant, whom ye delight in." Christ was the publisher of the gospel covenant; and in this respect he is called a Prophet, Acts iii. 22, whose office it was to impart God's will unto the sons of men, according unto the name, Angel. 6. Sometimes he is called the Mediator of the new covenant; "for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament," saith the apostle. Now, a mediator is such a one as goes betwixt two parties at variance, imparting the mind of the one to the other, so as to produce a right understanding, and thereby to work a compliance betwixt both. And thus Christ is a Mediator betwixt God and us, an Interpreter, an Inter-messenger betwixt God and his people.

Secondly. The reasons of Christ being a Prophet, were

these. 1. That he might reveal to his people the will of his Father. 2. That he might open and expound the same, being once delivered. 3. That he might make saints understand and believe the same. (1.) As a Prophet, he delivers to the people his Father's will, both in his own person, and by his ministers. In his own person, when he was upon earth, as a "minister of the circumcision;" and by his ministers, from the beginning of their mission till the end of the world. (2.) As a Prophet, he opens and expounds the gospel. Thus being in the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, he "opened the book, and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor," &c. and then "he closed the book, and said, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." The gracious purpose of God towards lost mankind, was a secret locked up in the breast of the Father; and so it had been even to this day, had not Christ, who was in the bosom of the Father, revealed it unto us. Hence Christ is called the Interpreter of God: "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," by his interpretation. (3.) As a Prophet, he gives us to understand and to believe the gospel. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures;" and thus was the case of Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened." He that at first opens scriptures, at last opens hearts: "He is that true Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." He enlightens every believer, not only with a common natural light, but with a special supernatural light of saving, spiritual, and effectual knowledge. Now there is no prophet can do this save only Jesus Christ; he only is able to cause our hearts to believe, and to understand the matter which he doth teach and reveal. Other prophets may plant and water; "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water," but he, and only he, can "give the increase."

Thirdly. The excellencies of Christ, above all other prophets, are in these respects: 1. Other prophets were but

types and shadows of this great Prophet; even Moses himself was but a figure of him: "A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me," saith Moses. These words, "like unto me," plainly shew, that Moses was but an image and shadow of Christ. Now as substances far excel shadows, so doth Christ far excel all the prophets. 2. Other prophets revealed but some part of God's will, and only at some times. "God," saith the apostle, "at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets;" *i.e.* he let out his light by little and little, till the Day-Star and Sun of Righteousness arose; "but in these last days he hath spoken by his Son;" *i.e.* he hath spoken more fully and plainly. In this respect, saith the apostle, the heirs of life and salvation were but children before Christ's incarnation. As now we see but through a glass darkly, towards what we shall do in the life to come; so did they of old in comparison of us; their light, in comparison of ours, was but an obscure and glimmering light. 3. Other prophets speak only to the ears of men, but Christ spake, and still speaks, to the heart; "He hath the keys of David, that openeth, and no man shutteth, that shutteth, and no man openeth;" it is a similitude taken from them that keep the keys of a city or castle, without whom none can open or shut; no more can any man open the heart, or break in upon the spirit, but Christ; he only is able to open the eyes of the mind by the secret, kindly, and powerful working of his own Spirit. 4. Other prophets had their commission and authority from him: "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd;" *i.e.* the words of the wise are divine and heavenly instructions; the masters of assemblies are gospel ministers, and Christ is that one Shepherd, from whom these words are given, and from whom these masters have their authority.

Sect. IV. *Of Christ's Miracles.*

The miracles of Christ this year were many. Now what were these miracles but a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in Christ's sermons? One calls them A verification of Christ's doctrine, a signal of Christ's sermons. If we observe, we shall find him to work most of his miracles in actions of mercy. Indeed once he turned water into wine, and sometimes he walked upon the waters; but all the rest were actions of relief, according to the design of God, who would have him manifest his power in shewing mercy to men.

1. Amongst all his miracles done this year, now was it that at Cana where he wrought the first miracle: he does a second; "A certain nobleman, or courtier, came to Jesus, and besought him to come down to his house, and to heal his son, who was at the point of death." We do not find Christ often attended with nobility, but here he is. This noble ruler inquires after Christ in his necessity. Happy was it for him that his son was sick, for otherwise he would not have been so well acquainted with his Saviour. The first answer Christ gives is a word of reproof, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Incredulity was the common disease of the Jews, which no receipt could cure but wonders. "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after signs." The doctrine of Christ, and all the words that he spake, must be attested by miracles, or they will not believe. O, what a sin is this! Christ's next answer is a word of comfort: "Go thy way, thy son liveth." O the meekness and mercy of Jesus Christ! When we would have looked that he should have punished this suitor for not believing, he condescends to him that he may believe: "Go thy way, thy son liveth." With one word doth Christ heal two patients, the son and the father; the son's fever, and the father's unbelief. We cannot but observe here the steps of faith, he that believed somewhat ere he came,

and more when he went, grew to more faith in the way, and when he came home he enlarged his faith to all the skirts of his family. "And the man believed the Word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way ;" and in the way one meets him, and tells him, "Thy son liveth ;" which recovery he understands to be at the same time that Christ had spoken those healing words, and "himself believed and his whole house."

2. Now was it that "a centurion came unto Christ, beseeching him, and saying, My servant lieth at home sick of the palsy grievously tormented." Many suitors come to Christ, one for a son, another for a daughter, a third for himself, but I see none come for his servant but this one centurion ; and if we observe Christ's answers to his suit, we see how well pleased Christ is with his request : "And Jesus saith unto him, 'I will come and heal him.' He is no respecter of persons, but he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." It may be this servant had more grace, or he had more need, and therefore Christ will go down to visit this poor sick servant. Nay, says the centurion, "I am not worthy, Lord, that thou shouldst come under my roof :" *q. d.* Alas, Lord, I am a gentile ; an alien, a man of blood, but thou art holy, thou art omnipotent ; and therefore, "only say the word, and my servant shall be whole." The centurion knew this by the command he had over his own servants ; "I say to this man go, and he goes ; and to another come, and he comes ; and to a third do this, and he doth it." O, that I were such a servant to my heavenly Master ! Alas ! every one of his commands says, "Do this, and I do it not :" every one of his inhibitions says, "Do it not, and I do it." He says, "Go from the world, and I run to it." He says, "Come to me, and I run from him." Wo is me, this is not service, but enmity : Oh, that I could come up to the faith and obedience of this exemplar, and could serve my Christ as these soldiers did their master ! Jesus marvels at the centurion's faith. We never find Christ wondering at

gold, or silver, or costly and curious works ; but when he sees the acts of faith, he so approves of them that he is ravished with wonder. And he that both wrought this faith, and wondered at it, doth now reward it ; “ Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it unto thee, and his servant was healed in the self-same hour.”

3. Now it was, even the day after, that “ Jesus goes into the city of Nain.” The fruitful clouds are not ordained to fall all in one field, Nain must partake of the bounty of Christ, as well as Cana or Capernaum. He no sooner enters the gate but he meets a funeral ; a poor widow, with her weeping friends, is following her only son to the grave ; Jesus observing her sad condition, pities her, comforts her, and at last relieves her : here was no solicitor but his own compassion. In his former miracles he was sued to ; but now Christ offers a cure, to give us a lesson, that “ whilst we have to do with the Father of mercies, our miseries and afflictions are the most powerful suitors.” Christ sees and observes the widow’s sadness, and presently speaks comfortably to her, “ Weep not ; and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise.” See how the Lord of life speaks with command ; the same voice speaks to him, that shall one day speak to us, and raise us out of the dust of the earth. So at the sound of the last trumpet, by power of the same voice, we shall arise out of the dust, and stand up gloriously ; “ This mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption.” And lest our weak faith should stagger at so great a difficulty, by this he hath done, Christ gives us tastes of what he will do ; the same Power that can raise one man, can raise a world.

4. Now it was that in the synagogue he finds “ a man that had a spirit of an unclean devil.” This, I take it, is the first man that we read of as possessed with a devil : “ And he cried, Let us alone ; what have we to do with thee ? ” &c. In these words the devil dictates, the man speaks ; and whereas the words are plural, “ Let us

alone," it is probable he speaks of himself, and the rest of the men in the synagogue with him. So high and dreadful things are spoken concerning the coming of Christ, (Mal. iii. 2, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?") that the devil by this takes opportunity to affright the men of the synagogue with the presence of Christ; he would dissuade them from receiving Christ by the terrors of Christ, as if Christ had come only to destroy them: "Thou Jesus of Nazareth, art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." "And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him." The word, "hold thy peace," is in the original *φιμωθῆτι*, be muzzled. It was not a bare command of silence, but there was such power in it, that it cast a muzzle upon the mouth of satan, that he could speak no more; "and when the unclean spirit had torn him," not with any gashes in the flesh, or dismembering of his body, for he hurt him not, but with some convulsion fits, as it is supposed, then "he threw them in the midst," and made an horrid cry, "and so came out." The people all take notice of the doctrine attested by so great a miracle, "What a Word is this!" Surely this was the great design of all the miracles of Christ, to prove his mission from God, to demonstrate his power unto men, to confirm his gospel, to endear his precepts, to work in us faith to help us heavenward: "These signs were recorded that we might believe,—and that believing we might have life through his name."

I have given you several instances of the miracles of Christ in this second year of his ministry; only a few words on this doctrine of miracles for our information: as, 1, What they are? 2. Why they are? 3. Whether they are continued in this great transaction of our salvation?

For the first, What they are? Miracles are unusual events, wrought above the course or possibility of nature; such were the miracles of Christ, and such were the

miracles of the prophets and of the apostles of Christ ; for what they did was above nature ; and all the difference betwixt their miracles and the miracles of Christ, was only in this, viz. they wrought them not in their own name and power, as Jesus Christ did.

For the second, *Why* they are ? Many reasons are given, but this is the main ; “ Miracles were wrought for the confirming of some Divine truth or doctrine at its first revelation, or promulgation.” To this purpose, miracles were as the trumpets or heralds by which the gospel was first commended unto us ; as the law of Moses was first authorized by manifold miracles wrought at Sinai, and in the desert, which afterward ceased when they were settled in the promised lands ; so the gospel of Christ was first authorized by manifold miracles, but the sound thereof having now gone through all the world, these miracles cease.

For the third, *Whether* they are continued in this great transaction of our salvation ? I answer, yea ; in this respect miracles cease not ; it is without controversy that Jesus Christ, in carrying on our salvation, is adding miracle to miracle. There is a chain of miracles in the matter of our salvation from first to last : as, 1, It was a miracle that God, before we had a being, should have once thought of us ; especially that the blessed Trinity should contrive that astonishing plan for the salvation of our souls : Oh, what a miracle was this ! 2. It was a miracle that God for our sakes should create the world, and after our fall in Adam, should preserve the world, especially considering that our sin had unpinned the whole frame of the creation ; and that God, even then sitting on his throne of judgment, ready to pass the doom of death for our first transgression, should give a promise of a Saviour, when justly he might have given us to the devil, and to hell, according to his own law, “ in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” 3. It was a miracle that God’s Son should take upon him our nature, and that in our nature he should transact our peace ; that he

should preach salvation to us all if we would believe ; and to the end that we might believe, that he should work so many signs and miracles in the presence of his disciples, and of a world of men. 4. It was a miracle that God should look upon us in our blood : O, miracle of mercies ! If creation cannot be without a miracle, surely the new creation is a miracle indeed. So contrary are our perverse natures to all possibilities of salvation, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in a miracle, we should have perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. Indeed every man living in the state of grace, is a perpetual miracle ; in such a one his reason is turned into faith, his soul into spirit, his body into a temple, his earth into heaven, his water into wine, his aversions from Christ into intimate union with Christ. O what a chain of miracles is this ! Why, Lord, " if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Say thus, You that are yet in your blood ; " Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief."

## CHAP. III.

SECT. I. *Of the third Year of Christ's Ministry.*

HITHERTO all was quiet, neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans, nor Galileans, did as yet malign the doctrine or person of Jesus Christ ; but, he preached with much peace on all hands, till the beginning of this year. I shall not yet speak of his sufferings, neither shall I speak much of his doings, only such things as refer more principally to the main business of our salvation, I shall touch in these particulars. As, 1, The ordination of the apostles. 2. His reception of sinners. 3. The easiness of his yoke, and the lightness of his burden.

SECT. II. *Of Christ's Ordination of his Apostles.*

In the ordination of his apostles, are many considerable things. The evangelist Luke lays it down thus : " And

it came to pass in those days, that he went out unto a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." Till this time Christ taught alone ; but, because after his ascension, he must needs have a ministry, till the end of the world, preparatory to this, he chooseth out some, whom he would have on purpose to wait upon him all the time of his ministry, till he was taken up into heaven. In this election, or ordination, here is, 1. The Person by whom they are chosen, Jesus Christ. 2. The place where they are chosen, viz. on a mountain. 3. The time when they were chosen, after his watching and praying all night. 4. The company out of whom they were chosen, they were his disciples. 5. The number of them that were chosen, they were twelve. 6. The end to which they were chosen, it was to an apostleship, " he chose twelve, whom he also named apostles."

1. The person by whom they are chosen is Jesus Christ. They chose not themselves, but were chosen of Christ ; this call was immediate, and therefore most excellent. 2. The place where they were chosen was on a mountain. Mountains are open and in view, which shewed his ministry must be publick. Again, mountains are subject to winds and tempests, which shewed their callings would meet with many oppositions. 3. The time when they were chosen, after he had " continued all night in prayer to God ;" he goes not to election, but first he watches, and prays all the night before. This shews the singular care that Christ had in this great employment. What ? To set men apart to witness his name, and to publish to the world the gospel of Christ ? This he would not do without much prayer. 4. The company out of whom they are chosen, " He called unto him his disciples, and out of them he chose twelve." A disciple of Christ is one thing, and an apostle of Christ is another thing. Those were Christ's disciples that embraced Christ's doctrine of faith and repentance.

It was not material to the constituting of a disciple of Christ, whether persons followed Christ as many did, or returned to their own homes, as others did. The man out of whom the legions of devils were cast, "besought Christ that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done to thee." I make no question but Christ at the election of his apostles had many disciples both waiting on him, and absent from him; and out of them that waited on him, his apostles were chosen; Christ's ministers should be first disciples. O how unfit are any to take upon them the ministry of Christ, that were never yet the disciples of Christ. First, the grace of God must be within us, and then must that grace of God be discovered by us. 5. The number of them that were chosen, they were twelve. Very probable, the number was figured out to us, in the twelve tribes of Israel. 6. The end to which they were chosen, it was to an apostleship; *i.e.* that they might be Christ's legates to the sons of men, that they might be sent up and down the world to persuade men to salvation.

### SECT. III. *Of Christ's Reception of Sinners.*

I cannot limit this only to one year of Christ's ministry, but I shall mention it only this year. Now this will appear, 1. In the doctrine of Christ. 2. In the practice of Christ.

1. In his doctrine, Christ lays it down expressly, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is no more but come, and welcome. The gospel shuts none out of heaven, but those that by unbelief lock the door against their own souls. Christ is so willing to receive sinners, as that he sets all his doors open, and he casts out none that will but come in. And why so? "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (1.) "I came down from heaven." It was a great journey from heaven to

earth; and this great journey I undertook for no other purpose but to save sinners. Great actions, (as one says well,) must needs have great ends. Now this was the greatest thing that ever was done, that the Son of God should come down from heaven. And what was the end, but the reception, and salvation of sinners? "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Had not Christ come down, sinners could not have gone up into heaven, and therefore that they might ascend, he descends. (2.) "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." His Father had sent him on purpose to receive, and to save sinners; and, to this purpose he is called "the Apostle of our profession, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house." His Father could not send him on an errand, but he was sure to do it. His Father's mission was a strong demonstration, that Christ was willing to receive those sinners that would but come to him.

Again, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." The very pith, heart, and marrow of the gospel is contained in these words. The occasion of them was thus; on that last day of the feast of tabernacles, the Jews were wont with great solemnity to draw water out of the fountain of Siloam, at the foot of mount Sion, and to bring it to the altar, singing out of Isaiah, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Now Christ takes them at this custom, and recalls them from earthly to heavenly waters, alluding to that of Isaiah, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. Incline your ear, and come unto me, and your souls shall live." The Father saith come, the Son saith come, the Spirit saith come; yea, "the Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is a-thirst come, and whosoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely." All the time of Christ's ministry, we see him tiring himself, in going about from place to place,

upon no other errand than this, to cry at the markets, “ Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ! If any sinners love life, if any will go to heaven, let them come to me, and I will shew them the way to my Father’s bosom, and endear them to my Father’s heart.

2. Christ’s reception of sinners appears yet more in his practice. How welcome were all sorts of sinners unto him. He rejected none that acknowledged him for the Messiah ; he turned none away that gave up their souls to be saved by him in his own way. This he manifests, 1, Parabolically, especially in those three parables, of the lost piece of silver, of the lost sheep, and of the lost son ; I shall instance in this last, which may well serve for all the rest. “ When the prodigal was yet far off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” In these words observe, (1,) “ His father sees him,” before he sees his father ; no sooner a sinner thinks of heaven, but the Lord spies him, and takes notice of him. (2.) The father sees him while he was yet a great way off ; he was but in the beginning of his way ; his father might have let him alone till he had come quite home to his house, and it had been a singular mercy to have bid welcome then ; but he takes notice of him while yet a great way off. Sinners may be far off from God in their own apprehensions, and yet the Lord even then draws near, whilst thus they apprehend. (3.) His father had pity or compassion on him ; the Lord’s bowels yearn within him, at the sight of his returning prodigals. (4.) His father ran ; there is much in this : as, 1, It had been mercy though his father had stood still, till his son had come. 2. What a mercy is this, that his father will go, and give his son the meeting. 3. But above all, O what abundant mercy call we this, that the father will not go, but run ! If he would needs meet his son, might he not have walked towards him in a soft slow pace ; O no, if a sinner will but come, or creep towards Christ, mercy will not go a foot-pace, but run to meet him ; bowels full of mercy, out-pace bowels pinched with

hunger ; God's mercy is over all his works, and so it is over all our needs, and over all our sins. (5.) He "ran, and fell on his neck ;" *i. e.* he embraced him ; O wonder ! who would not have been loath to have touched him ? was he not in his loathsome, stinking rags ? we see mercy is not nice ; "When I passed by," (said God,) "I saw thee polluted in thy own blood, and I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live ;" yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live ; that very time of her blood, was the time of love. (6.) He "ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him ;" there is a passage somewhat like this, and "Esau ran to meet Jacob, and he embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him ;" before, he had thought to have killed him, but now he kissed him ; it is not to tell how dear the father was to his prodigal son, when "he ran, and fell on his neck, and embraced, and kissed him." The scope of the parable is this, that Christ is willing and glad to receive sinners. "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways ; for why will you die, O house of Israel ?"

Christ manifests this willingness in his practice really ; amongst many instances I shall insist only on one, a notable instance of this year. One of the pharisees, named Simon, invited Christ to eat with him, into whose house when he had entered, a certain woman, that was a sinner, abiding there in the city, heard of it : she came to Jesus in the pharisee's house, and was no sooner come, but she lays her burden at Jesus's feet, and presents him with a broken heart, and weeping eye, and an alabaster box of ointment. "She stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head ; and she kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment." 1. She stands at his feet, a sign of her humility. O what a change ! She that before took her liberty of pride and lust, comes in remorse and regret for her sins, and throwing away her former pride, stoops, and waits, and humbly stands at Jesus's feet. 2. "She stood at his feet behind him ;" it comprehends a tacit confession of her sins, she knew herself unworthy of

Christ's presence ; she durst not look him in the face ; but she waits behind him ; her shame speaks her repentance. 3. " She stood at his feet behind him, weeping," her grief burst out in tears ; she heeds not the feast, nor feaster ; but, falling down, weeps bitterly for her sins. 4. " She began to wash his feet with tears ;" she wept a shower of tears, great enough to wash the feet of her blessed Jesus. This was the manner of the Jews, to eat their meat lying down, and leaning on their elbows ; and in this posture Jesus sitting or lying at meat, this woman had the convenience to weep on his feet. 5. " She wipes his feet with the hairs of her head ;" her hair being added to her beauty, she made it a snare for men ; but now she consecrates it to her Lord ; worthy fruit of serious repentance. 6. " She kissed his feet," in token of her new choice, and new affection ; her kisses had formerly been to wantons, but now she bestows them on the feet of Christ. 7 " She anointed them with ointment ;" which expression was so great an ecstacy of love and sorrow, that to anoint the feet of the greatest monarch was long unknown, and in all the pomps of Roman prodigality, it was never used till Otho taught it Nero. When Simon observed this sinner so busy, he thought within himself that Christ was no prophet, that he did not know her to be a sinner ; for although the Jews' religion did permit harlots to live, yet the Pharisees would not admit them to the benefits of ordinary society : and hence Simon made an objection within himself, which Jesus knowing, (for he understood his thoughts as well as his words,) first makes her apology, and then his own ; the scope gives us to understand that Christ was not of the same superciliousness with the Pharisees ; but that repenting sinners should be welcome unto him ; and this welcome he publisheth first to Simon, " Her sins which are many, are forgiven ;" and then to the woman ; " Thy sins are forgiven thee, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

What ! is Christ most willing to receive sinners ? O, then, who would not come to Jesus Christ ? Methinks

now all sinners, of all sorts, should say, Though I have been a drunkard, a swearer, an unclean person, yet now I hear Christ is willing to receive sinners, and therefore I will go to Jesus Christ. This is my exhortation, O come unto Christ, come unto Christ; behold here in the name of the Lord I stand, and make invitation to poor sinners; O will you not come? How will ye answer it at the great day, when it shall be said, the Lord Jesus made a tender of mercy to you, and you would not accept of it? O come to Christ, and believe on Christ; as Christ is willing to receive you, so be you willing to give up your souls to him.

#### SECT. IV. *Of Christ's easy Yoke, and light Burden.*

With respect to the easiness of Christ's yoke, and the lightness of his burden, Christ declares it in these words: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." "My yoke," *i. e.* my commandments, so the apostle John gives the interpretation, "his commandments are not grievous." "My yoke is easy," *i. e.* my commandments are without any inconvenience; the trouble of a yoke is not the weight, but the uneasiness of it, and Christ speaks suitably, "My yoke is easy, and my burden," *i. e.* my institutions. The word primarily signifies the freight or ballast of a ship, which cuts through the waves as if it had no burden; and without which burden there would be no safety in the ship.

The Christian religion and the practice of it, are full of sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness. The reasons of this I shall reduce to these heads: The Christian religion is most rational. If we should look into the best laws that the wisest men of the world ever agreed upon, we would find that Christ adopted the quintessence of them all into his own law. The highest pitch of reason is but as a spark, a taper, which is involved and swallowed up in the body of this great light that is made up by the Sun

of Righteousness. Some observe, that Christ's discipline is the breviary of all the wisdom of the best men, and a fair copy and transcript of his Father's wisdom ; there is nothing in the laws of the Christian religion but what is perfective of our spirits. Indeed the Greeks, whom the world admired for their wisdom, accounted the preaching of the gospel foolishness, and therefore God blasted their wisdom ; as it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent," 1 Cor. i. 19. The gospel may be as foolishness unto some, but "unto them who are called, Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

The Christian religion is all composed of peace : "her ways are the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," Prov. iii. 17 Christ framed all his laws in pursuance of his design of peace ; peace within, and peace at home, and peace abroad. 1. It holds forth a certain heavenly peace and tranquillity within ; "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." But on the contrary, "the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt ; there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Their passions were never yet mortified ; and such passions usually rage in wicked men as are most contrary, and demand contrary things ; the desire of honour cries, Spend here ; but the passion of avarice cries, Hold thy hands ; lust cries, Venture here ; but pride saith, No such thing, it may turn to thy dishonour : anger cries, Revenge thyself here ; but ambition says, It is better to dissemble. And here is fulfilled that of the Psalmist, "I have seen violence and strife in the city." The Vulgate renders it, "I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the self-same city." First, iniquity, for all the demands of these passions are unjust. And, secondly, contradiction, for one passion cries out against another. But now, "great peace have they that love thy law ;" for by the aid of Christ and his grace, their passions are subdued, and they pass on their life sweetly and calmly, without any

perturbations much troubling their spirits; they have that "peace which passeth all understanding," which "the world can neither give nor taste of."

2. It holds forth peace at home. The laws of Jesus teach us how to bear with the infirmities of our relatives; and indeed, whosoever obeys the laws of Jesus Christ, he seeks with sweetness to remedy all differences, he throws water upon a spark; he lives sweetly with his wife, affectionately with his children, discreetly with his servants; and they all look upon him as their guardian, friend, and patron. But, look upon an angry man, not subject to these Christian laws, and when he enters upon his threshold, it gives an alarm to his house, every little accident is the matter of a quarrel, and every quarrel discomposes the peace of the house, and sets it on fire, and no man can tell how far it may burn. O the sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness of the Christian Religion! Where that is embraced and followed, the man is peaceable, and charitable, and just, and loving, and forbearing, and forgiving; and how should there be but content in this blessed family?

3. It holds out peace abroad; it commands all offices of kindness, gentleness, love, meekness, humility. It prescribes an austere, and yet a sweet deportment; it commands all those labours of love, to relieve the stranger, to visit the sick, to wash the feet of the poor; it sends us upon charitable embassies to unclean prisons, filthy dungeons, and, in the cause of Christ, to lay down our lives one for another. It teacheth us how to return good for evil, kindness for injuries, a soft answer for the rough words of an enemy. O! when I think of this, I cannot but think of him who said, "That either this was not the Christian religion, or we were not Christians." For my part, I am easily persuaded, that if we would but live according to the Christian religion, one of those great plagues that vex the world (I mean the plague of war,) would be no more. Certainly this was one of the designs of Christianity, that there should be no wars, no jars, no

discontents amongst men. And if all men that are called Christians, were indeed charitable, peaceable, just, loving, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, what sweet peace should we have? How would this world be an image of heaven, and of the society of saints and angels in glory?

Thus far I have held forth Jesus in his life, or during the time of his ministry: and now was it that "Jesus knew his hour was come, and that he should depart out of this world unto the Father:" but of that hereafter. Our next business is to direct you in the art or mystery how we are to look unto Jesus in respect of his life.

## CHAP V

### *SECT. I. Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Life.*

From the object considered, that we may pass to the act, let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. We have many books of the lives of men, of the lives of heathens, of the lives of Christians; and by this we come to know the generations of old. But, above all, read over the life of Jesus, for that is worth thy knowing. To this purpose we have four evangelists, who in blessed harmony set forth his life: these should be read over and over; "then shall we know," saith the prophet, "if we follow on to know the Lord." Ah! my soul, that which thou knowest of Christ already is but the least part of what thou art ignorant of. "We know but in part," saith Paul of himself and others. The highest knowledge which the most illuminated saints have of Jesus Christ is but imperfect. Come, then, and "follow on to know the Lord." Still inquire after him. Imitate the angels, who ever desire to stoop down and to pry into the actings of Christ for our salvation. And for thy better knowledge, 1. Study those passages in the

first year of Christ's ministry ; as the preaching of John, the baptism of Christ, his fasting and temptation in the wilderness, his first manifestation by his several witnesses, his whipping of the buyers and sellers out of the temple. 2. Study over those passages in the second year of Christ's ministry ; as those several sermons that he preached ; and because his miracles were as signals of his sermons, study the several miracles that he wrought. Thou hast but a few instances in comparison of all his miracles, and yet how fruitful are they of spiritual instructions ? 3. Study over those passages in the third year of Christ's ministry ; as his commissioning his apostles to call sinners, his readiness to receive them that would come in, and his sweetening the ways of Christianity to them that are come ; " for his yoke is easy, and his burden is light."

O what rare matter is here for Christian study ! Some have taken such pains in the study of these things, that they have written large volumes. Men have been writing and preaching a thousand six hundred years of the life of Christ, and they are writing and preaching still. O, my soul, if thou dost not write, yet study what is written. Come with fixed thoughts to that blessed subject, that will make thee wise unto salvation. Paul accounted " all things but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." If thou didst truly understand the excellency of this knowledge, thou couldst not but account all things loss in comparison of it.

## SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. It is not enough to study and know, but we must muse, and meditate, and consider it, till we bring it to some profitable issue. By meditating on Christ, we may feel a kind of insensible change ; as those that stand in the sun for other purposes, find themselves lightened and heated ; therefore look further, O my soul, have strong apprehensions of these several passages of the life of Christ.

1. Consider the preaching of John the Baptist. We talk of strictness, but shew me, among all the ministers or saints of this age, such a pattern of sanctity and singular austerity. He had an excellent zeal, and a vehement spirit in preaching, and the commentary upon all his sermons was his life: he was clothed in camel's hair, his meat was locusts and wild honey. He contemned the world, resisted temptations, despised honours, and in all respects was a rare example of self-denial and mortification; and by this means made an excellent preparation for the Lord's coming. O, my soul, sit a while under this preacher. See what effect it worketh on thy heart and life. Dost thou feel in thee a spirit of mortification? Dost thou, with the Baptist, die to the world? Dost thou deny thy will? Dost thou abstain from pleasures, and sensual complacences, that the flesh being subdued to the Spirit, both may join in the service of God? O, my soul, so consider the preaching of this forerunner of Christ, till thou feelest this consideration to produce some warmth in thy heart and influence on thy life, in order to holiness, self-denial, and mortification.

2. Consider the baptism of Christ. He was baptized, that in the symbol he might purify our nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken. Surely every soul that lives the life of grace, is born of water and the Spirit; and to this purpose Christ, who is our life, went down into the waters of baptism, that we, who descend after him, might find the effects of it, pardon of sin, and holiness of life. Had not Christ been baptized, what virtue had there been in our baptism? As it became him to fulfil all righteousness, and therefore he must needs be baptized, so he fulfilled it not for himself, but for us. Christ's obedience in fulfilling the law is imputed to all that believe unto righteousness, as if themselves had fulfilled; so that he was baptized for us, and the virtue of his baptism is derived unto us. Therefore, if thou art in Christ, thou art baptized into his death, and baptized into

his baptism ; thou partakest of the fruit and efficacy both of his death, and life, and baptism, and all.

3. Consider the fasting and temptation of Christ in the wilderness. Now we see what manner of adversary we have, how he fights, how he is resisted, how overcome. In one assault, satan moves Christ to doubt of his Father's providence ; in another, to presume on his Father's protection ; and when neither diffidence nor presumption can fasten upon Christ, he shall be tried with honour. And thus he deals with us ; if he cannot drive us to despair, he labours to lift us up to presumption ; and if neither of these prevail, then he brings out pleasures, profits, honours, which are indeed most dangerous. O, my soul, whilst thou art in this warfare, here is thy condition ; temptations, like waves, break one on the neck of another. If the devil was so busy with Christ, how shouldst thou hope to be free ? How mayest thou account that the repulse of one temptation will but invite to another ? But here is thy comfort, thou hast such a Saviour as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin. How boldly therefore mayest thou go to the throne of grace to receive mercy, and to find grace to help in time of need ? Christ was tempted, that he might succour them that are tempted. Never art thou tempted, O my soul, but Christ is with thee in the temptation. He hath sent his Spirit into thy heart, to make intercession for thee there ; and he himself is in heaven, making intercession, and praying for thee there ; yea, his own experience of temptations hath so wrought it in his heart, that his love and mercy is most of all at work when thou art tempted most. As dear parents are ever tender of their children, but then especially when they are sick and weak ; so, though Christ be always tender of his people, yet then especially when their souls are sick, and under temptation, then his bowels yearn over them indeed.

4. Consider Christ's first manifestations by his several witnesses. We have heard of his witnesses from heaven,

the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and of his witnesses on earth, the Baptist, his disciples, and the works that he did in his Father's name ; and all these witnesses being in a lively manner held forth in the preaching of the gospel, they are witnesses to us ; even to this day is Christ manifested to us ; yea, and if we are Christ's, even unto this day is Christ manifested within us. O my soul, consider this above all ! It is this manifestation within that concerns thee most ; " Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." If Christ be not manifested in thy heart by his blessed Spirit, thou art no son of God ; and therefore the apostle puts thee seriously on this trial, " Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove yourselves ; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates ?" Is Christ manifested in thee ? Surely this is more than Christ manifested to thee. The bare history is a manifestation of Christ unto thee, but there is a mystery in the inward manifestation. The apostle, speaking of the saints, adds, " To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory." O the riches of the glory of this mystery ! God might have shut thee up in blindness with the world, but hath he revealed Christ in thee ? Hath he let thee see into the wonders of his glory ? Hath he given thee the light of his glory within ? This only the experimental Christian feels.

5. Consider the preaching of Christ. O the admirable sermons of this great Prophet !—Read and peruse those he hath left on record. How spiritual was that sermon of Christ ? " Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." It may be thou art a doctor, a master of Israel, thou art a learned scholar, thou art a man of parts and abilities in other things ; it may be thou hast read long in the bible, and hast heard many, very many sermons ; but, ah ! miserable soul, it may be all the work is to do still within. Come, preach this sermon

of Christ to thine own soul : “ Unless I be born again, I cannot enter into heaven. Born again ! O Lord, what is that ? Was ever such a thing done upon me ? Was ever I cast into the pangs of a new birth ? and continued I in those pangs until Christ Jesus was formed in me ? Are old things done away, and all things now become new ? Is the old man, the old lusts, the old conversation, quite abandoned and left ? Are my principles new ? my aims and ends new ? my life and conversation new ?” Thus might I paraphrase on all the sermons ; but I intend brevity. Only consider, O my soul, as if this sermon, and all the rest, had been preached to thee ; realize Christ standing by thee, and opening his mouth, and teaching thee thus and thus. Surely there is a speaking of Christ from heaven : “ See that ye refuse not him” (saith the apostle) “ that speaketh from heaven.” And besides, he hath his ministers here on earth, and they are daily preaching over these sermons of Christ ; they preach such things as were first spoken by the Lord himself ; they beseech and pray thee in Christ’s stead. O, then, meditate on these things, and give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.

6. Consider the miracles of Christ in pursuance of the doctrine delivered in his blessed sermons. Here is a world of matter to run over ; such miracles as man never did before. O my soul, consider these miracles, and believe that doctrine which was ratified with arguments from above. How shouldst thou but assent to all those mysterious truths which are so strongly confirmed by an almighty hand.

7 Consider Christ’s ordination of his apostles. “ He chose twelve, whom he named apostles.” And what was the office of these apostles, but to “ go and teach all nations.” The gospel was first preached in Jewry, but afterwards the sound of it came unto us. O the goodness of God in Christ ! What ? That “ repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, beginning at Jerusalem, and afterwards among all nations.” Of

what near concernment, O my soul, is this to thee ! What art thou but a sinner of the Gentiles ? Understand that term. When the apostle would express the greatest sinners that the world had, he calls them "sinners of the Gentiles." Why ? The Gentiles knew not God, the Gentiles were unacquainted with Christ, the Gentiles walked in nothing but sin. O then what a love is this, that God should ever have thought of good-will towards thee ! How shouldst thou be ravished in this one meditation ? What ? that the sun of his gospel, now in these latter times, when the sun is set in Zion, where it first arose, should make a noon with us, and shine more brightly here, for ought I know, or yet can learn, than in any other nation, country, kingdom, throughout all the world ? "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and counsel of God ! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out !"

8. Consider Christ's reception of sinners. He sent forth his apostles to call them in ; and if they would but come, how ready was he to receive them. This was Christ's errand from heaven. Ah, poor soul ! why shouldst thou despair because of sin ? Look on Christ as spreading out his arms to receive thee. Look on the gracious nature that is in Christ. Look on the office of Christ ; it is an office of saving and shewing mercy, that Christ hath undertaken ; it is an office to receive sinners ; yea, " to seek and to save that which was lost ;" to bring home straying souls to God ; to be the great peace-maker between God and man. Certainly the devil strangely wrongeth many a poor troubled soul, in that he can bring them to have hard thoughts of Jesus Christ : How can they more contradict the office of Christ ? How can they more contradict the gospel-description of Christ, than to think him a destroyer of his creatures, and one that hath more mind to hurt than to help them ? Resolve, O my soul, to throw thyself on him for life and for salvation. Why, if thou wilt but come, he hath promised freely to make thee welcome. All the day long he

stretcheth out his arms, and would fain gather thee and all others into his embraces.

9. Consider the easiness of his yoke, and the lightness of his burden. Many are willing to take Jesus as their Saviour, but they are unwilling to take him on his own terms ; they imagine it an hard task, and a heavy burden. It is otherwise with Christians ; for “ his commandments are not grievous.” O my soul, if thou canst but taste, thou wilt find a world of sweetness in Christ’s ways ; there is sweetness in the word : “ How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth ? ” There is sweetness in prayer. Hast thou not known the time that thou hast tasted the joys of heaven in prayer ? There is sweetness in meditation : now, O my soul, thou art in the exercise of this duty, now thou art in the meditation of the easiness of Christ’s burden, tell me, is there nothing of heaven in this meditation ? O if men did but know what ravishing sweetness there is in the ways of God, they could not but embrace them, and esteem one day’s society with Jesus Christ, better than all the gold in the world.

10. Consider the holiness of Christ’s nature, and the holiness of his life. (1.) For the holiness of his nature ; if thou couldst but clearly see it, what work would it make in thy breast ? Christ’s inward beauty would ravish love out of the devils, if they had but grace to see his beauty. This loveliness of Christ ravishes the souls of the glorified. How is it, O my soul, that thou art not taken with this meditation. But, (2.) Go from the holiness of his nature to the holiness of his life, it may be that will make a deeper impression on thy spirit. Consider his charity, his self-denial, his contempt of the world, his mercy, his bounty, his meekness, his pity, his humility, his obedience to his Father. A fruitful meditation on these particulars cannot but make thee like Christ. O the wonder that any should disclaim the active obedience of Christ, as to his own justification ! away, away with these cavils, and consider the obedience of Christ in relation to thyself. “ God sent

forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." That is, under the whole law ; the one half of the law, which is the directive part, he was made under that, and satisfied it by the innocency of his life, without breaking one jot or tittle of the law, and so he answers that part, as it might be the principal ; the other half of the law, which is the penalty, he was under that also, and satisfied it by suffering a wrongful death, no way deserved or due by him, and so he answered that part as it might be the forfeiture. But if we come now to ask, for whom is all this ? It is only for us, that we might be redeemed and adopted ; redeemed from all evil, and adopted or interested into all good. If this be so, O who would for a world of gold, lose the influence and the benefit of Christ's active obedience ? Consider this, O my soul, till thou feelest some virtue to come out of Christ's life into thyself.

### SECT. III. *Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us desire Jesus, carrying on the work of salvation in his life : it is not enough to know and consider, but we must desire : our meditation on Christ should draw forth our affections to Christ : and amongst all affections I place this first of all, a desire after Christ. But what is it in Christ's life that is so desirable ? I answer, Every passage, every thing of Christ is desirable. All that concerns Christ in any kind whatsoever is very precious and excellent, and necessary and profitable, and comfortable, and therefore desirable : but to put them in order,—

I The meanest things of Christ are desirable things. The very filings of gold, the dust of precious stones are of real value. Hence we read, that one poor woman sought no more but to wash Christ's feet, and to kiss them : another breathes out these desires ; " If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole." John the Baptist thinks it an honour to " unloose the latchets

of his shoes :" David to " be a door-keeper of the house of God." Yea, he puts a happiness on the sparrow and the swallow, that may build their nests beside the Lord's altar.

2. The more considerable actions of Christ are especially desirable. O my soul, run through his life, and consider some of his more eminent actions. (1.) To his friends, he was sweet and indulgent ; where there was any beginning of grace, he did encourage it ; so was the prophecy, " A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." And so the people that fainted, that were " scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd"—" He was moved with compassion on them," *ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ' αὐτῶν* ; he was bowelled in heart, his very bowels were moved within him. (2.) To his enemies he was kind and merciful ; many a time he discovered himself most of all unto sinners. He was never more familiar with any at first acquaintance, than with the woman of Samaria, that was an adulteress. How ready was he to receive sinners ? How ready to pardon sinners ? How gracious to sinners after pardon ? See it in Peter, he never upbraided him ; only he looks upon him ; and afterwards asked, " Lovest thou me ?" Often he was wronged by men, but what then ? Did he call for fire down from heaven ? Indeed his disciples would fain have had it so ; but he sweetly replies, " You know not what spirit you are of : the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Sometimes we find him shedding tears for those very persons that shed his blood : " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things belonging to thy peace." Well might they " sing in that day in the land of Judah,—In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee ; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee."

3. The ever-blessed and holy person of Christ is desirable above all. " My Beloved is the chieftest of ten thousand ;—yea, he is altogether lovely or desirable ;" so

world has) should be compared with the beauty of Christ, they would be but as lumps of darkness : the brightest cherub is forced to screen his face, from the dazzling brightness of the glory of Christ. Alas ! the cherubim and seraphim are but as stars in the canopy of heaven, but Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, that at once illumines and drowns them all.

Come then, breathe, O my soul, after the enjoyments of this Christ ; " O that this Christ were mine ! O that the actions of Christ, and the person of Christ were mine ! O that all he said, and all he did, and all he were, were mine ! O that I had the silver wings of a dove, that in all my wants, I might fly into the bosom of Christ ! If I must not sit at table, O that I might but gather up the crumbs ! Surely there is bread enough in my Father's house ; Christ is the bread of life ; Christ is enough for all the saints in heaven and earth to feed on ; and what must I pine away, and perish with hunger ? Thousands of instructions dropped from him while he was on earth ; O that some of that food might be my nourishment ! " O that my ways were directed according to his statutes ! " Many a stream, and wave, and line, and precept, flowed from this fountain, Christ ; O that I might drink freely of this water of life ! He hath proclaimed it in my ears ; " If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink :" O that I might come and find welcome ! Sure I thirst, I feel in me such a burning drought, that either I must drink or die ; either the righteousness of Christ, the holiness of Christ, the holiness of his nature, and the holiness of his life must be communicated to me, or farewell happiness in another world. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly ; I long to see the beauty of thy face ! Such is thy beauty, that it steals away my heart after thee, and I cannot be satisfied till with Absalom I see the King's face. Come, Christ, or if thou wilt not come, " I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love."

SECT. IV. *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in this life. By this hope, I mean an hope well grounded. The main question is, Whether Christ's life be mine? Whether all those passages of his life laid open belong unto me? Whether the habitual righteousness and actual holiness of Christ be imputed to my justification? And what are the grounds and foundations on which my hope is built? The apostle tells us, that God gives good hopes through grace; if hope be right and good, it will manifest itself by the operation of saving grace; O look into thy soul! what gracious effects of the life of Christ are there! Certainly his life is not without some influence on our spirits, if we be his members, and he be our head. O the glorious effects flowing out of Christ's life into a believer's soul!

1. If Christ's life be mine, then am I freed from the law of sin; this was the apostle's evidence; "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Christ's life is called the Spirit of life, because of its perfection; and this Spirit of life hath such a power in it, here termed a law, that it works out in believers a freedom from the law or power in sin. Look to this! Doth the power of Christ's life throw out of thy heart and life the power of sin? Here is one ground of hope.

2. If Christ's life be mine, then "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth me." Paul speaks out this evidence, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live," &c. He conjoins the death of Christ, and the life of Christ in one and the same soul; as if he had said, No man knows the benefit of Christ's death, but he that feels the virtue of Christ's life; there is no assurance of Christ's dying for us, but as we feel Christ living in us; if the power of Christ's death mortify my lusts, then the virtue of Christ's life will quicken my soul; "I live, yet not I,

Vatablus renders it, *Christus est totus desideria*, Christ is all desires. If the actions of Christ be desirable, what must himself be? “ He is the express image of the Person of his Father ;” as the print of the seal on the wax is the express image of the seal itself ; so is Christ the highest representation of God. And hence it is that Christ is called the “ Standard-bearer of ten thousands :” all excellencies are gathered in Christ, as beams in the sun. Come, poor soul ! thy eyes run to and fro in the world to find comfort and happiness ; cast thy eyes back, and see heaven and earth in one ; look, if thou wilt, at what thy vast thoughts can fancy, not only in this world, but in the world to come ; see that, and infinitely more, shining forth from the person of Jesus Christ ; no wonder if the angels stand amazed at him, no wonder if the saints adore him, no wonder if all creatures veil all their glory to him.

O, what are all things in the world to Jesus Christ ? Paul compares them together, with this one thing ; “ And I account all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.” “ And I account all things :” surely, all things is the greatest account that can be cast up ; for it includeth all prices, all sums ; it takes in earth and heaven, and all therin ; what are they in comparison of Christ, but as feathers, dung, shadows, nothing ? If there be any thing worthy a wish, it is eminently, transcendently in the Lord Jesus Christ ; there is no honour, no felicity like that which Christ hath ; some are sons, Christ is an only Son ; some are kings, but Christ is King of kings ; some are honourable, none above angels ; Christ is above angels and arch-angels : “ To which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee ?” Some are wealthy, Christ hath all the sheep and cattle on a thousand hills ; the very utmost parts of the earth are his ; some are beautiful, Christ is the fairest of all the children of men ; he is spiritually fair, he is all glorious within ; if the beauty of the angels (which I believe are the most beautiful creatures the

but Christ liveth in me;" I live to God, and not unto myself; I live to Christ, and not unto the world; I live according to the will of God, not after my own lust and fancy. O my soul! question thyself in these few particulars; dost thou live to God, and not to thyself? Dost thou live to Christ, and not to the world? Dost thou derive thy life from Christ? And hath that life of Christ a special influence in thy soul? Dost thou feel Christ living in thy understanding and will, in thy imagination and affections, in thy duties and services? 1. In thy understanding, by thy prizing the knowledge of Christ, by determining to know nothing in comparison of Christ? 2. In thy will, by making thy will free to choose and embrace Christ; and by making his will to rule in thy will. 3. In thy imagination, by thinking upon him with more frequency and delight; by having more high, and honourable, and sweet apprehensions of Christ than of all the creatures? 4. In thy affections, by fearing Christ above all earthly powers, and by loving Christ above all earthly persons? 5. In thy duty and services, by doing all thou doest in his name, by his assistance, and for his glory? Why then, here is another ground of thy hope; surely thou hast thy part in Christ's life.

Away, away with all doubts and perplexing fears! If thou findest the power of sin dying in thee; if thou livest, and livest not, but, in truth, it is Christ that lives in thee; then thou mayest assure thyself that Christ's habitual righteousness, and actual holiness is imputed to thy justification; thou mayest confidently resolve that every passage of Christ's life belongs to thee. Would Christ have ever lived in thee, have been the soul of thy soul, the all of thy understanding and will, imaginations and affections, duties and services, if he had not purposed to have saved thee by his life? Surely it is good that I both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God. I cannot hope in vain, if these be the grounds of my hope.

**SECT. V. *Of believing Jesus in that Respect.***

Let us believe in Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his life. Many souls stand aloof, not daring to make a particular application of Christ, and his life to themselves; but herein is the property of faith, it brings all home, and makes use of whatsoever Christ is, or does, for itself.

1. In order to this, faith must directly go to Christ. Many poor souls humbled for sin, run immediately to the promise of pardon, and rest on it, not seeking for, or closing with Christ in the promise. This is a common error, but we should observe, that the first promise that was given, was not a bare word, simply promising pardon, peace, or any other benefit; but it was a promise of Christ's person, as overcoming satan, and purchasing those benefits; "The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." So when the promise was renewed to Abraham, it was not a bare promise of blessedness and forgiveness, but of that Seed, that is, Christ, Gal. iii. 6, in whom that blessedness was conveyed; "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." So that Abraham's faith first closed with Christ in the promise, and therefore he is said to see Christ's day, and rejoice. Christ, in the first place, is every where made the thing which faith embraces to salvation, and whom it looks unto and respects, as it makes us righteous in the sight of God. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And hence it is called "the faith of Christ," Gal. ii. 16, Phil. iii. 9. Because Christ is that which faith apprehends immediately; and, as for the other promises, they depend all on this, "Whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins;" and, "He that believeth on the Son of God shall have life everlasting." O remember this in the first place, faith must go unto

Christ ; and yet I mean not to Christ as nakedly considered ; but to Christ as compassed with all his promises, privileges, benefits.

2. Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh. For now, under the New Testament, our faith more usually and immediately addresseth itself unto Christ, as God dwelling in our nature, than to the Father, who is merely God. God in the flesh is more distinctly set forth in the New Testament, and so he is more distinctly to be apprehended by the faith of all believers. Remember this, that our faith, in the more direct and immediate exercise of it, must be pitched upon Christ, as God in the flesh.

3. Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh, made under the law. And hence it is that the apostle joins these together, "God sent his Son made of a woman, made under the law." If Christ had been out of the compass of the law, his being incarnate, and made of a woman, had done us no good. Suppose one in debt, and danger of the law, to have a brother of the same flesh and blood, of the same father and mother, what will this avail, if that same brother will not come under the law, that is, become his surety, and undertake for him ? This is our case, we are debtors to God, and there is an handwriting against us. Here is a bond of the law, which we have forfeited ; now, what would Christ have availed, if he had not come under the law, if he had not been our Surety, and undertaken for us ? Our faith therefore must go to Christ, as made under the law, not only taking our nature upon him, but our debt also ; our nature as men, and our debt as sinful men. "He hath made himself sin for us, who knew no sin," that is, he made himself to be handled as a sinner for us under the law, though he knew no sin on his part, but "continued in all things written in the book of the law, to do them." He both satisfied the curse, and fulfilled the commandments. O remember this ! as Christ, and as Christ in the flesh, so Christ in the flesh made under the law, is principally to be in the eye of our faith. If we put all

together, our first view of faith is to "look on Christ, God in the flesh, made under the law."

4. Faith going to Christ, as God in the flesh, and as made under the law, is principally to look to the end and design of Christ, as being God in the flesh, and as fulfilling the law. The apostle tells us of a remote, and of a more immediate end. (1.) Of a remote end. "God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." This was the remote end of Christ. Alas! we were strangers from the adoption, and lay under the law, as men on whom sentence had passed. Now, from this latter we are redeemed; he was under the law, that we might be redeemed from under the law; nor is that all; but, as we are redeemed, so are we adopted the children of God: and this end I rather attribute to the life of Christ, "that we might receive the adoption," that is, from the estate of prisoners condemned, that we might be translated into the estate of children adopted. O the mercy of God! who ever heard of a condemned man being afterwards adopted? Would not a condemned prisoner think himself happy to escape with life? But the zeal of the Lord of Hosts hath performed this; if true believers, we are in Christ both pardoned and adopted; and, by this means, God's heavenly inheritance is estated upon us. O let our faith look mainly to this design of Christ! He was made under the law, yea, and under the directive part of the law by his life. He fulfilled every tittle of the law by his obedience, that we might be entitled to glory.

(2.) For the more immediate end of Christ; the apostle tells us, Christ was made under the law, or fulfilled all righteousness, "that the law might be fulfilled in us." O my soul, look to this! Herein lies the pith, and the marrow of thy justification. Of thyself thou canst do nothing good; but Christ fulfilled the law in thy stead; and if now thou wilt but exercise thy faith, thou mayest

feel the virtue and efficacy of Christ's righteousness flowing into thy own soul. But here is the question, how should I manage my faith, to feel Christ's righteousness my righteousness ? I answer, 1. Thy way is to discern this righteousness of Christ, this holy and perfect life of the Lord Jesus in the whole, and in all the parts of it, as it is laid down in the written word. 2. Thy way is to believe and to receive this as sacred and unquestionable in reference to thy own soul. 3. Thy way is to apply and improve this discovery according to those ends to which thou believest they were designed. Yea, but there lies the question, How may that be done ? I answer, 1. Setting before thee that discovery, (that perfect life of Christ,) first endeavour to be deeply humbled for thy great want of conformity thereto in whole and in part. 2. Still keeping thy spirit intent on the pattern, quicken, provoke, and increase thy sluggish soul, with renewed, redoubled vigilancy and industry, to come up higher towards it, and (if it were possible,) completely to it. Yet, 3. having the same copy before thee, exercise faith thereupon, as that which was performed and is accepted on thy behalf. And so go to God, and offer Christ's holy life and active obedience unto him. And that, first, to fill up the defects of thy utmost endeavour. Secondly, to put a value and worth upon what thou doest, and attainest to. Thirdly, to make Christ's righteousness thy own, that thou mayest say with the Psalmist, in way of assurance, " O God, my righteousness."

#### SECT. VI. *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. O what a lovely object is the life of Christ ? Who can read over his life, who can think over his worthiness, both in his person, relations, actions, and several administrations, and not love him with a singular love ? O my soul, much hath been said to persuade thee to faith ; and if now thou believest thy

part in those several actings of Christ, let thy faith take thee by the hand, and lead thee from one step to another; from his baptism to his temptations; from his temptations to his manifestations; and so on. Is not here fuel enough for love? Canst thou read the history of love, (for such is the history of Christ's life,) and not be all on a flame? Come, read again! There is nothing in Christ but what is lovely, winning, and drawing.

1. When he saw thee full of filth, he went down into the waters of baptism, that he might prepare a way for the cleansing of thy polluted soul. 2. When he saw the devil ready to swallow thee up, he himself entered into the list, and overcame him, that thou mightest overcome, and triumph with Christ in his glory. 3. When he saw thee in danger of death through thy unbelief, he condescended so far to succour thy weakness as to manifest himself by several witnesses. Three in heaven, and three on earth; yea, he multiplied his three on earth to thousands of thousands; so many were the signs witnessing Christ, that the disciples which testified of them could say, "If they should be written every one, the world could not contain the books that would be written." 4. When he saw thee like the horse and mule, "not having understanding," he came with his instructions, adding line unto line, and precept on precept, "teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom;" and sealing his truth with many miracles, that thou mightest believe, and in believeng mightest have life through his name. 5. When he saw thee a sinner of the Gentiles, "a stranger from the commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the world," he sent his apostles and messengers abroad, and bade them preach the gospel to thec; "Go to such a one in the dark corner of the world, an isle at such a distance, and set up my throne amongst that people, open the most precious cabinet of my love there; and amongst that people, tell such a soul that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is one."

6. When he saw thee cast down, and refusing thy own mercy, crying and saying, "What! is it possible that Jesus Christ should send a message to such a dead dog as I am?" He then appeared, and even then spread his arms wide to receive thy soul; he cried, "Come unto me, thou that art weary and heavy laden with sin, and I will give thee rest." 7. When he saw thee in suspense, and heard thy complaint, "Oh! it is an hard passage, and an high ascent up to heaven! Oh! what shall become of my poor soul?" He told thee, that "all his ways were ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace;" that thou shouldst find by experience "his yoke was easy, and his burden light." 8. When he saw the wretchedness of thy nature, and original pollution, he took upon him thy nature, and by this means took away thy original sin. Here is the lovely object! What is it but the absolute holiness of the nature of Christ? This is the fairest beauty that ever eye beheld; this is that compendium of all glories: now if love be a motion and union of the appetite to what is lovely, how shouldst thou flame forth in love unto the Lord Jesus Christ? See, O my soul, here is the sum of all the particulars thou hast heard, Christ loves thee, and Christ is lovely; his heart is set upon thee, who is a thousand times fairer than all the children of men. Doth not this double consideration, like a mighty loadstone, snatch thy heart unto it? "It pleased thee, my Lord, to say to thy poor church, 'Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.' But O let me say to thee, 'Turn thine eyes to me, that they may overcome me: my Lord, I would be thus ravished, I would be overcome: I would be thus out of myself, that I might be all in thee.' How chill and cold are we in our converses with Jesus Christ? Surely, had Christ's love been like this faint and feeble love of ours, we had been damned wretches, without all hope. O Christ, I am ashamed that I love thee so little; I perceive thy loves are great by all those actings in thy life: come, blow upon my garden, persuade me by the

Spirit, that I may love thee ; many sins are forgiven me, O that I may love thee much !”

**SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.***

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. In order to this,

1. Let us contemplate this life of Christ, let us spend our frequent thoughts upon this blessed object ; the reason we miss of our joys is, because we are so little employed in contemplations of our Christ. It is said, that “ he pities us in our sorrows ; but he delights in us when we delight in him.” Certainly he would have us to delight in him, and to that purpose he way-lays our thoughts, and wheresoever we look we may still think on him. O my soul, cast thine eyes which way thou wilt, and thou shalt hardly look on any thing but Christ Jesus hath taken the name of that very thing upon himself. Is it day ? and dost thou behold the sun ? He is called the Sun of Righteousness. Or, is it night ? and dost thou behold the stars ? He is called a star ; “ There shall come a Star out of Jacob.” Or, is it morning ? and dost thou behold the morning-star ? He is called “ the bright Morning-star.” Or, is it noon ? and dost thou behold clear light all the world over ? He is “ that Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Come a little nearer ; if thou lookest on the earth, and takest a view of the creatures about thee, seest thou the sheep ; “ as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.” Or, seest thou a lamb ; “ Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.” Seest thou a shepherd watching over his flock ; “ I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” Or, seest thou a fountain, rivers, waters ; he is called a fountain. “ In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the house of David.” Or, seest thou a tree good for food, or pleasant to the eye ? He is called “ the Tree of Life ;” and, “ as the apple-tree

among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons." Seest thou a rose, a lily, any fair flower in a garden? He is called a rose, a lily; "I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the vallies." To come a little nearer yet; art thou adorning thyself, and takest thou a view of thy garments? He is a garment; "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Art thou eating meat, and takest a view of what is on thy table; "He is the Bread of God, true Bread from heaven, the Bread of Life." Thus Christ way-lays our thoughts, that wheresoever we look we should ever think of Christ. Now, I cannot think of Christ, or the life of Christ, of Christ preaching, or of Christ preached, but I must rejoice in Christ; as sometimes the apostles said, "Christ is preached, I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

2. Let us upon good grounds hope our share in the life of Christ. Hope and joy go together: if I have but assured hope that Christ's life is mine, I cannot but rejoice therein. Look to this, O my soul: peruse again and again thy grounds of hope. Do not slightly run them over; thou canst not be too sure of Christ. When Zaccheus, in the sycamore-tree, heard but Christ's voice, "Zaccheus make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide in thy house." O what haste made Zaccheus to receive Christ! He came down hastily, and received him joyfully. This offer to Zaccheus is thine as well as his, if thy hope be right. Come down, poor soul, saith Christ, "this day must I abide in thy house." Then what joy should there be in thy heart when Christ comes in, or when thou feelest Christ come in? "The friend of the Bridegroom rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice." How much more may the bride herself rejoice?

3. Let us come up to more and more fruition of Christ. All other things work our delight but as they look towards this. Now in this fruition of Christ are contained these things: (1.) A propriety in Christ; for, as a sick man doth not feel the joy of a sound man's health,

so neither doth a stranger to Christ feel the joy of a believer in Christ. How should he joy in Christ that can make no claim to him ? (2.) A possession of Christ. This exceedingly enlargeth our joy. O how sweet was Christ to the spouse, when she could say, " I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." Many are taken up with the joy and comfort of outward possessions, but Christ is better than all: in one Christ is comprised every scattered comfort here below. Christ mine, (saith the soul,) and all mine. O the usefulness of Christ to all believing souls ! The Scriptures are full of this, as appears by all his titles in Scripture : he is our life, our light, our bread, our water, our milk, our wine ; " His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed." He is our Father, our Brother, our Friend, our Husband, our King, our Priest, our Prophet : he is our justification, our sanctification, our wisdom, our redemption : he is our peace, our mediation, our atonement, our reconciliation, our all in all. Alas ! I look on myself, and I see I am nothing ; I have nothing without Jesus Christ. Here is a temptation, I cannot resist it ; here is a corruption, I cannot overcome ; here is a persecution, I cannot down with it. Well, but Christ is mine, I have an interest in Christ, and I have possession of Christ, and I find enough in Christ to supply all my wants. Those that lived with him, " all rejoiced for the glorious things that were done by him." And doth not thy heart leap within thee ? O my soul, I cannot but check thee for thy deadness. It is said, that when " Christ was at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice, and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen." What ? a multitude of disciples rejoicing in Christ's acts ? And art thou not one amongst the multitude ? If thou art a disciple, rejoice thou : surely it concerns thee as much as them ; and therefore rejoice, lift up thy voice in harmony with the rest, " rejoice, and again rejoice."

SECT. VIII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus. Thus we read, that looking up to Jesus, or lifting up the eyes to Jesus, goes for prayer in God's book ; "My prayer will I direct to thee, (saith David,) and will look up ;" faith in prayer will often come out at the eye. Thus Stephen looked up to heaven ; let us look up to Jesus by calling on him. Now this calling on him contains prayer and praise.

1. We must pray that all these transactions of Jesus during his life, or during his ministry upon earth, may be ours. We hope it is so, and we believe it to be so : but for all that, we must pray that it may be so. There is no contradiction betwixt hope, and faith, and prayer ; "Lord, I believe, yet help my unbelief ; be it to me according to my faith, how weak soever."

2. We must praise God for all those passages in Christ's life. Thus did the multitude ; "They praised God with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest !" What (my soul,) hath Christ done this for thee ? Was he made under the law to redeem thy soul, and adopt thee for his son, to the inheritance of heaven ? Came he down from heaven, and travelled so many miles on earth to woo and win thy heart ? Spent he so many sermons, and so many miracles to work thee into faith ? O how shouldst thou bless, and praise, and magnify his name ? How shouldst thou break out into that blessed hymn, "To him that loved us, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, as he acted for us in his life. Looking to Jesus intends this especially. We must look as one looks to his pattern ; as mariners at sea, that they

may run a right course, keep an eye on that ship that bears the light: so in the race that is set before us, we must have our eye on Jesus, our blessed Pattern. This must be our constant query, “Is this the course that Jesus steered?”

In this particular, I shall examine these three queries : 1. Wherin we must conform. 2. Why we must conform. 3. How we must conform to this life of Jesus. For the first, I answer ;—We must not, cannot conform to Christ in those works proper to his Godhead ; as in working miracles. Nor need we conform to Christ in some other particulars ; as in his voluntary poverty and ceremonial performances. But we must conform to Christ’s life. 1. In respect of his judgment, will, affections, we must look at his spirit, observe what mind was in him : for, said the apostle, “Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ,” Phil. ii. 5, 1 Cor. ii. 16. 2. In respect of his virtues, graces, holiness. “Learn of me, (saith Christ,) for I am meek and lowly in heart.” I might instance in all other graces ; for he had them all in fulness : “And of his fulness have we all received, grace for grace.” 3. In respect of his words. The very officers of the priest could say, “Never man spake like this man :” and sometimes they all “wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth ; who when he was reviled, reviled not again.” 4. In respect of his carriage, conversation, close walking with God. The apostle sets forth Christ as an High-Priest, who “was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.” And in like manner, saith Peter, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the virtues of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light :” that ye should in your lives and conversations express those graces and virtues which were so eminent in Jesus Christ ; that you should not only have them, but that you should hold them forth. The word signifies properly to preach ; so clearly should we express the virtues of Christ ;

as if our lives were so many sermons on the life of Christ. As for all other saints, though they are imitable, yet with limitation, only so far as they express his life in their conversation: "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ."

For the second, why we must conform? Upon what motives? I answer, 1. Because Christ hath done and suffered much to that end. If it had not been for our imitation, I cannot think that Christ would have lived on earth so many years to have done so many glorious and meritorious works.

2. Because Christ is the best and highest exemplar of holiness that ever the world had; hence we must needs conform to Christ. Christ is "the head of the body, the beginning, the first-born from the dead; in all things he hath the pre-eminence;" and the rule is general, that, That which is first and best in any kind, is the rule and measure of all the rest. Why, such is Christ; O then let him be the guide of our life, and of our manners.

3. Because Christ doth not only give us an example, but he doth succour and assist us by its easiness. Some sweetly observe, that Christ's piety, which we must imitate, was even, constant, unblamable, complying with civil society, without any prodigious instances of actions greater than the imitation of men. We are not commanded to imitate a life whose story tells us of ecstacies in prayer, of abstractions of senses; no—but a life of justice, piety, and devotion; and it is very remarkable, that, besides the easiness of this imitation, there is a virtue and efficacy in the life of Christ. It may be, we think our way to heaven is troublesome, obscure, and full of objection. Well, saith Christ, but mark my footsteps; come on, and tread where I have stood, and you shall find the virtue of my example will make all smooth and easy; you shall find the comfort of my company, you shall feel the virtue and influence of a perpetual guide.

4. Because Christ in his word hath commanded us to follow his steps; "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart;—and, ye call me Master, and Lord, and ye

say well, for so I am ; if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet ; for I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you :" And " as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." We must be holy, as Christ is holy, yet still we must look at the holiness of Christ, as the sun, and root, and fountain ; and that our holiness is but as a beam of that sun, but as a branch of that root, but as a stream of that fountain.

For the third, how we must conform to this life ? I answer :—

1. Let us be humbled for our want of conformity to this copy. What an excellent pattern is here before us ? And how far, how infinitely do we come short ! Alas ! if Christ will not own me, unless he see his image written upon me, what will become of my poor soul ? Why, Christ was meek, and humble, and lowly in spirit ; Christ ever went about doing good ; and now, when I come to examine my own heart according to this original, I am as opposite to Christ as hell to heaven. O wo is me ! what a vast disproportion there is betwixt Christ's life and mine ? Thus, O my soul, shouldst thou humble thyself ; from each morning, each prayer, each meditation, each self-examination, shouldst thou fetch new, fresh, clear, particular occasions of humiliation. As thus, Lo there the evenness, gravity, holiness, heavencliness of Jesus Christ ! Lo there the dear love, tender pity, constant industry, unwearied pains, self-denial, contempt of the world, in Jesus Christ ! Lo there those continual devout breathings of soul after his Father's glory, after the immortal good of precious souls ! O ! the sweet expressions, gracious conversation ! O ! the blessed lustre of his divine soul ! O ! the sweet countenance, sacred discourse, ravishing demeanour, winning deportment of Jesus Christ ' and now I reflect upon myself, O the wide disproportion of mine therefrom ! I should punctually answer, perfectly resemble, accurately imitate, exactly conform to this life of Christ ;

but ah ! my unevenness, lightness, vanity ! Ah ! my deformity, slightness, execrableness ! Ah my sensuality, brutishness, devilishness ! how clearly are these, and all my other enormities, discovered by the blessed life of Jesus !

2. Let us quicken our sluggish souls to conform to Christ. If this was one of the ends of Christ's coming, to destroy the works of the devil, to deface all satan's works, even his work in me, and to set his own stamp on my soul ; how then should I but endeavour to conform ? I read but of two ends of Christ's coming into the world in relation to us, whereof the first was to redeem his people, and the other was to purify his people ; "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The one is the work of his merit, which goeth upwards to the satisfaction of his Father ; the other is the work of his grace, which goeth downwards to the sanctification of his church ; in the one, he bestoweth his righteousness on us by imputation ; in the other, he fashioneth his image in us by renovation ; and what, O my soul, wouldst thou destroy the end of Christ's coming in the flesh ? Thus let us provoke our souls to this conformity ; let us excite our faint, drooping, languishing affections, desires, endeavours ! Let us, with enlarged industry, engage, and encourage our backward spirits to fall upon this duty ; let us come up higher towards it, or if possibly we may, completely to it, that the same mind, and mouth, and life, may be in us that was in Jesus Christ ; that we may be found to walk after Christ, that we may tread in the very prints of the feet of Christ, that we may climb up after him into the same heavenly kingdom, that we may aspire continually towards him, and grow up to him, even "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

3. Let us regulate ourselves by the life of Christ ; whatsoever action we go about, let us do it by this rule, Would Christ have done this ? It is true, some things

are expedient and lawful with us, which were not suitable to the person of Christ. "Marriage is honourable with all men, and the bed undefiled;" but it did not become his Person. Writing of books is commendable with men, because, like Abel, being dead, they may still speak; but it would have been derogatory to the Person and office of Christ. For it is his prerogative to be in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, to be present to all his members, to teach by power, and not by ministry; to write his law in the hearts of his people, and to make them his epistle. In these things, we must only respect the allowance of Christ, but in other things we must reflect upon the example of Christ; as, (1.) In sinful acts eschewed by Christ; as when I am tempted to sin, then am I to reason thus with myself; Would my blessed Saviour, if he were upon earth, do thus and thus? If he were to live again, would he live after this manner? Would this be his language? would such speech as this drop from his lips? (2.) In case of moral obedience, concerning which we have both his pattern and precept. I look upon Christ as my rule; and I inquire thus, Did Christ frequently pray with his disciples, and alone? And shall I never in my family, or in my closet, think upon God? Did Christ shew mercy to his very enemies? And shall I be cruel to Christ's members? O my soul, look in all thy sins, and in all thy duties, to thy Original, and measure them by the holiness of Christ. Whether in avoiding sin, or in doing duty, think, What would my blessed Saviour do in this case? Or what did he in the like case, when he was upon earth? If we had these thoughts every day, if Christ were continually before our eyes, if in all we do or speak we should still muse on this: What would Jesus Christ say if he were here? It would be a blessed means of our living in comfort, and spiritual conformity to the commands of God. Let us look fixedly on Jesus Christ; let us keep our spiritual eyes still on the pattern, until we feel ourselves conforming to it; let us set the copy of Christ's life in our view,

and let us look upon it with the eye of reason, and with the eye of faith.

But how should we keep the eye of our faith on this blessed object, until we feel this conformity in us? I answer, 1. Let us set apart some times on purpose; the day begins to close; if together with our closet prayer we would fall on this duty of looking unto Jesus by lively faith, how blessed a season might this be!

2. Let us remove hinderances; satan labours to hinder the soul from beholding Christ with the dust of the world. "The God of this world blinds the eyes of men :" O let us take heed of fixing our eyes on this world! Our own corruptions are also great hinderances to this view of Christ; away with all carnal passions, sinful desires; unless the soul be spiritual, it can never behold spiritual things.

3. Let us fix our eyes only on this blessed object; a moving eye sees nothing clearly. When the angels are said to look into these things, the word signifies, that they look into them narrowly; as they who bowing or stooping down look into a thing, so should we look narrowly into the life of Christ; our eye of faith should be set upon it in a steady manner, as if we forgot all the things behind, and had no other business in the world.

4. Let us look on Christ with a craving eye, with an humble expectation to receive a supply of grace. Lord, thou art not only "anointed with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," but for thy fellows: I am earthly-minded, but thou art heavenly; I am full of lusts, but the image of God is perfect in thee. Thou art the fountain of all grace, an head of all influence as well as of eminence. Thou art not only above me, but thou hast all grace for me; O give me some portion of thy meekness, lowliness, heavenly-mindedness, and of all other the graces of thy Spirit. Surely thou art an heaven of grace, full of bright shining stars: O that of that fulness thou wouldest give me to receive grace for grace.

5. Be ye assured that our prayer (if it be in faith,) is

even now heard. Never any came to Christ with strong expectations to receive grace, or any benefit prayed for, that was turned empty away ; besides, Christ hath engaged himself by promise to make us like himself ; “ As he who hath called us is holy, so should (yea, and so shall) we be holy in all manner of conversation.” O let us build on his gracious promise. Heaven and earth shall pass away before one tittle of his word shall fail ; only understand we that our conformity must be gradual ; “ We all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory ;” *i. e.* from grace to grace ; or from glory begun in obedience to glory consummate in heaven.

6. If, notwithstanding all this, we feel not for the present this conformity in us, at least in such a degree, let us act over the same particulars again ; the gifts of grace are therefore communicated by degrees, that we might be taken off from living upon a received stock of grace, and that we might still be running to the spring : we have continual need of Christ’s letting out grace into our hearts, and therefore we must wait at the well-head, Christ : we must look on Christ as appointed on purpose by his Father to be the beginner and finisher of our holiness ; and we must believe that he will never leave that work imperfect whereto he is ordained of the Father. O then be not weary of this work, until he accomplish the desires of thy soul.

I have now done with this subject ; only before I finish, one word more. I deny not other helps, but amongst them all, if I would make choice which to call upon, that I may become more and more holy, I would set before me this glass, *i. e.* Christ’s holy life, the great Exemplar of holiness ; and this image we lost through our sin, and to this image we should endeavour to be restored by imitation. And how should this be done but by looking on Christ as our pattern ? In this respect, I charge thee, O my soul, (for to what purpose should I charge others, if I begin not at home ?) that thou make conscience of this evangelical duty. O be much in the exercise of it ;

not only in the day, but when night comes, and thou liest down on thy bed, let thy pillow be as Christ's bosom, in which John, the beloved disciple, was said to lean; there lean thou with John. Thus mayest thou lie down in peace, and the Lord only will make thee to dwell in safety; and when day returns again, have this in mind, yea, in all thy thoughts, words, and deeds, ever look unto Jesus as thy holy Exemplar: say to thyself, "If Christ my Saviour were now upon earth, would these be his thoughts, words, and deeds; would he be thus disposed as I now feel myself? Would he speak these words that I am now uttering? Would he do this that I am now putting my hand unto? O let me not yield myself to any thought, word, or action, which Jesus would be ashamed to own." Yea, if it be possible, going and standing, sitting and lying, eating and drinking, speaking, and holding thy peace, by thyself or in company, cast an eye upon Jesus, for by this means thou canst not choose but love him more, and joy in him more, and trust in him more, and be more and more familiar with him, and draw more and more grace, and virtue, and sweetness from him. O let this be thy wisdom, to think much of Christ, so as to provoke thee to imitation; then shalt thou learn to contemn the world, to do good to all, to injure no man, to suffer wrong patiently; yea, to pray for those that despitefully use thee and persecute thee; then shalt thou learn to bear about in thy body "the dying of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in thy body." This is to follow Christ's steps; he descended from heaven to earth for thy sake; do thou trample on earthly things, "seek after the kingdom of God and his righteousness," for thy own sake. Though the world be sweet, yet Christ is sweeter; though the world prove bitter, yet Christ sustained the bitterness of it for thee. And now he speaks to thee, as he did to Peter, Andrew, James and John, "Come, follow me;" O do not faint in the way, lest thou lose thy place in thy country, that kingdom of glory.

# LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS DEATH.

---

## THE FIFTH BOOK.

---

### CHAP. I.

#### SECT. I. *Of the Day of Christ's Sufferings, divided into Parts and Hours.*

THE Sun of Righteousness, that “arose with healing,” we shall now see go down in a ruddy cloud. And in this piece, as in the former, we must first lay down the object, and then direct you to look upon it. The object is Jesus, carrying on the work of man’s salvation during the time of his sufferings; we shall observe them as they were carried on successively in those few hours of his passion and death.

The whole time of these last sufferings of Christ I shall reduce to somewhat less than one natural day, consisting of twenty-four hours; and begin with the evening, according to the beginning of natural days from the creation, (as it is said, “The evening and the morning made the first day.”) In this revolution of time, I shall observe these several passages:—1. About six in the evening, Christ celebrated and eat the passover with his disciples,

at which time he instituted the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and this continued till the eighth hour. 2. About eight in the evening he washed his disciples' feet, and then, leaning on the table, pointed out Judas that should betray him ; and this continued until the ninth hour. 3. About nine in the evening, (the second watch in the night,) Judas went from the disciples ; and in the mean time, Christ made that spiritual sermon, and afterwards that spiritual prayer recited by John, ch. xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. ; and this (together with a psalm they sung,) continued at least until the tenth hour. That which concerns his passion follows immediately upon this ; and that only I shall notice in my following discourse.

This passion of Christ, I shall divide between the night and day. For the night, and his sufferings therein, we may observe these periods : 1. From ten to twelve, he goes over the brook Cedron, to the garden of Gethsemane, where he prayed earnestly, and sweat blood. 2. From twelve to three, he is betrayed, bound, brought to Jerusalem, and carried into the house of Annas, the chief priest. 3. From three till six, they led him from Annas to Caiaphas, when he and all the priests of Jerusalem set upon Jesus Christ ; and there it was that Peter denied Christ ; and at last the whole sanhedrim gave their consent to Christ's condemnation. 4. At six in the morning, about sun-rising, our Saviour was brought unto Pilate, and Judas Iscariot hanged himself. About seven, Christ is carried to Herod, who the year before had put John the Baptist to death. At eight, our Saviour is returned to Pilate, who propounded to the Jews, whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas loosed. About the ninth, (which the Jews call the third hour of the day,) Christ was scourged, and crowned with thorns. About ten, Pontius Pilate brought forth Jesus out of the common-hall, saying, "Behold the Man!" and then, in the place called Gabbatha, publickly condemned him to be crucified. About eleven, our Saviour carried his cross, and was brought to the place called Golgotha, where he was

fastened on the cross, and lifted up, “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness.” About twelve, (which the Jews call the sixth hour,) that supernatural eclipse of the sun happened. And about three in the afternoon, (which the Jews call the ninth hour,) the sun now beginning to receive his light, Christ cried, “It is finished!” and commanding his Spirit into his Father’s hands, gave up the Ghost. I shall add to these, that, about four in the afternoon, our blessed Saviour was pierced with a spear. And about five, (which the Jews call the eleventh, and the last hour of the day,) he was buried by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. So that in this round of our natural day you see the wonderful transaction of Christ’s sufferings.

SECT. II. *Of the Brook over which Christ passed.*

The first passage of that night was Christ’s going over the brook Cedron, to the garden of Gethsemane. “When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into which he entered, and his disciples.” In this passage observe we these particulars. I. The river over which they passed. II. The garden into which they entered. III. The prayer he made. IV. The agonies he suffered.

I. He and his disciples went over the brook Cedron. So it was called, (say some) from the cedars that grew along the banks; or (say others) from the darkness of the valley, for Kader signifies darkness; and this was done to fulfil a prophecy: “He shall drink of the brook in the way.” By the brook we may understand mystically the wrath of God, and rage of men, the afflictions which beset Jesus Christ; and by his “drinking of the brook,” Christ’s enduring afflictions.

2. In the way, he had a serious conference with his disciples: so the evangelist; “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out towards the mount of Olives, and then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite

the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Christ now begins the story of his passion ; the Shepherd shall be smitten ; and he proves it from the prophecy of the prophet, Zech. xiii. 7 ; " Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow.—Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad." God the Father is here brought in, as drawing and whetting his sword, and calling upon it to do execution against Jesus Christ. Christ's sufferings were long since resolved on in the councils of heaven ; and now in the way, " the only-begotten Son, who lay in the bosom of his Father," reveals this story ; he tells his disciples, " It is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered."

3. The disciples hearing this, are amazed ; Peter, who seems boldest, speaks first ; " Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." O rash presumption ! It appears in these particulars ; —1. Peter prefers himself before the rest, as if all the other disciples had been weak, and he only strong ; " Though all should be offended, yet will not I." 2. Peter contradicts Christ, with a few bragging words ; as if he had said, What though Zechariah hath it, yet I will never do it ; " though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee." 3. Peter never mentions God's assistance ; whereas, the apostle's rule is, " Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, and that." So Peter should have said, " By God's assistance I will not be offended, by the Lord's help I will not deny thee."

4. Ah my brethren ! let us remember, we are pilgrims and strangers upon earth, and our way lies over the brook Cedron ; we cannot expect to enter with Christ into glory, but we must first drink " of the brook in the way ;" that is, we must endure many afflictions, variety of afflictions.—You will say, " This is a hard saying, who can bear it ?" When Jesus told his disciples of his sufferings to be accomplished at Jerusalem, Peter takes the boldness to dehort his Master, " Be it far from thee, Lord, this

shall not be unto thee :" Jesus thereupon calls him satan, meaning that no greater contradictions can be offered to the designs of God, than to dissuade us from sufferings. There is too much of Peter's humour amongst us ; O this doctrine of afflictions will not go down with Antinomians ; and hence we believe we have our congregations so thin, in comparison of some of theirs ; they that can break off the yoke of obedience, and present heaven in the midst of flowers, and offer great liberty of living under sin, shall have their schools filled with disciples ; but they that preach the cross, and sufferings, and afflictions, and strictness of an holy life, shall have the lot of their blessed Lord ; that is, they shall be ill thought of, and deserted, and reviled against. Well, but if this be the way that Christ hath led us, let us follow him over the brook.

SECT. III. *Of the Garden into which Christ entered.*

Matthew relates it thus : " Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane ;" that is, *a valley of fatness* : certainly it was a most fruitful and pleasant place, seated at the foot of the Mount of Olives ; accordingly John relates it thus, " Jesus went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden ;" I believe it is not without reason, that our Saviour goes into a garden.—1. Because gardens are solitary places, fit for meditation and prayer ; to this end, we find Christ sometimes on a mountain, and sometimes in a garden. 2. Because gardens are places fit for repose and rest ; when Christ was weary with preaching, working of miracles, and doing acts of grace in Jerusalem, then he retires into this garden. 3. Because a garden was the place wherein we fell, and therefore Christ made choice of a garden to begin the work of our redemption. 4. Christ goes into this garden, that his enemies might the more easily find him out ; the evangelists tell us, " Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither, with his disciples :" sure then he went not thither to hide

himself, but rather to expose himself, to appear first in the field, and to expect his enemies. Thus it appears to all the world, that Christ's death was voluntary. "He poureth forth his soul unto death," saith the prophet; "He gave himself for our sins," saith the apostle; nay, himself tells us, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again."

#### SECT. IV *Of the Prayer that Christ there made.*

Jesus entering the garden, left his disciples at the entrance of it, calling with him Peter, James, and John; they only saw his transfiguration, the earnest of his future glory, and therefore his pleasure was, that they only should see of how great glory he would disrobe himself, for our sakes. Here he betakes himself to his great antidote, which himself prescribed to all the world: he prays to his heavenly Father; he kneels down; and not only so, but falls flat upon the ground. He prays with an intention great as his sorrow, and yet with a submission so ready, as if the cup had been the most indifferent thing in the world. The form of his prayer ran thus, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." In his prayer observe we these particulars: 1. The Person to whom he prays, "O my Father." 2. The matter for which he prays, "Let this cup pass from me." 3. The limitation of this prayer, "If it be possible;" and "if it be thy will."

1. For the person to whom he prays; it is his Father. As Christ prayed not in his Godhead, but according to his manhood; so neither prayed he to himself as God; but to the Father, the first Person of the Godhead. 2. For the matter of his prayer; "Let this cup pass from me." Some interpret thus, "Let this cup pass from me, though I must taste it, yet, O that I may not be too long!"

That which leads unto this last interpretation, is that of the apostle, " Christ in the days of his flesh, offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and he was heard in that which he feared," Heb. v. 7 How was he heard? Not in the removal of the cup; for he drank it all up; but in respect of the tedious annoyance; for though it made him sweat drops of blood; though it laid him dead in his grave; yet presently, within the space of forty hours, he revived, and awoke as a giant refreshed with wine; and so it passed from him, as he prayed, in a very short time; and by that short death, he purchased to his people everlasting life. 3. For the limitation of his prayer; " If it be possible, if it be thy will." He knows what is his Father's will, and he prays accordingly, and is willing to submit unto it; if the passing of the cup be according to the last interpretation, we shall need none of these many distinctions to reconcile the will of God and Christ. " If it be possible," signifies the earnestness of the prayer. And, " if it be thy will," the submission of Christ unto his Father; the prayer is short but sweet. How many things needful to a prayer do we find concentrated in this? Here is humility of spirit, lowliness of deportment, importunity of desire, a fervent heart, a lawful matter, and a resignation to the will of God. Some think this the most fervent prayer that ever Christ made on earth: " If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." And, I think it was the greatest submission to the will of God, that ever was found upon the earth; for whether the cup might pass or not pass, he leaves it to his Father: " nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt;" as if he had said, though in this cup are many ingredients, it is full red, and hath in it many dregs, and I know I must drink, and suck out the very utmost dreg; yet whether it shall pass from me in that short time, or continue with me a long time, I leave to thy will: I see in respect of my humanity, there is in me

flesh and blood ; I cannot but fear the wrath of God ; and therefore I pray thus earnestly unto my God ; “ O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

But what was there in the cup, that made Christ pray thus earnestly that it might pass from him ? I answer, 1. The great pain that he must endure ; the buffetings, scourgings, bleedings, crucifying ; all the torments from first to last throughout all his body ; all these now came into his mind, and all these were put into the cup of which he must drink.

2. The great shame that he must undergo. Now came into his thoughts, his apprehending, binding, judging, scorning, reviling, condemning ; and, O, what a bloody blush comes into the face of Christ, whilst in the cup he sees these ingredients !

3. The neglect of men, notwithstanding both his pain and shame. I look upon this, as a greater cut to the heart of Christ, than both the former ; when he considered, that after all his sufferings and reproaches, few would regard. This was a bitter ingredient ! naturally men desire, if they cannot be delivered, yet to be pitied ; but, when it comes to this, that a poor wretch is under many sufferings, and finds none to regard, it is an heavy case ; hence was Christ’s complaint : “ Have ye no regard, O all ye that pass by the way ? Consider, and behold, if ever there were sorrow like unto my sorrow !” Christ complains, not of the sharp pains he endured, but of this, Have ye no regard ? He cries not out, “ O deliver me, and save me ;” but “ O consider and regard me ;” as if he had said, all that I suffer I am contented with, I regard it not ; only this troubles me, that you will not regard ; it is for you that I endure all this ; and do you so look upon it, as if it nothing at all concerned you ? Christ is willing to redeem us with his own precious blood, but he saw many to pass by without any regard, yea, ready to trample his precious blood under their feet,

and “to account the blood of the covenant an unholy thing :” This was another spear in the heart of Christ, a bitter ingredient in this cup.

4. The guilt of sin which he was now to undergo ; “ upon him was laid the iniquity of us all.” All the sins of all the world, from the first creation to the last judgment, were laid on him. O ! what a weight was this. Surely one sin is like a talent of lead : O ! then, what were so many thousands of millions ? The very earth itself groans under the weight of sin until this day. David cried out, that “ his iniquities were a burden too heavy for him to bear.” Nay, God himself complains, “ Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.” Then no wonder if Christ, bearing all the sins of Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, cry out, “ My soul is heavy ;” for sin was heavy on his soul. “ Christ, his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree !” How bare our sins on the tree, but by his sufferings ?—“ And he hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ;”—How laid on him, but by imputation ?—“ And he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.” How made sin for us ? Surely there was in Christ no fundamental guilt : no, but he was made sin by imputation : he was our surety, and so our sins were laid on him, in order to punishment ; as if now in the garden, he had said to his Father, “ Thou hast given me a body ; as I have taken the debts and sins of all the world upon me, come now, and arrest me as the only pay-master. Lo here I am to do and suffer for their sins, whatsoever thou pleasest,” Psa. xl. 6—8, Heb. x. 4—9. Now this was no small matter ; little do we know or consider, what is the weight and guilt of sin. And this was another ingredient in Christ’s cup.

5. The power and malice of satan ; the devil had full leave ; not as it was with Job ; “ Do what thou wilt, but save his life ?” No, he had a commission without any such limitation ; the whole power of darkness was let loose to afflict him, as far as possibly he could ; and this

our Saviour intimates, when he saith, “The prince of this world cometh.” Now was it that the word must be accomplished, “Thou shalt bruise his heel.” If we look on the devil in respect of his evil nature, he is compared to a roaring lion. Not only is he a lion, but a roaring lion; his disposition to do mischief is always wound up to the height; and if we look on the devil in respect of his power, there is no part of our souls or bodies that he cannot reach; the apostle, describing his power, gives him names above the highest comparison; as “principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness above.” Devils are not only called princes, but “principalities;” not only mighty, but “powers;” not only rulers of a part, but of “all the darkness of all this world;” not only wicked spirits, but “spiritual wickedness;” not only about us, but above us; they hang over our heads continually. You know what a disadvantage it is to have your enemy get the upper ground; and this they have naturally, and always. O then, what a combat must this be, when all the power and all the malice of all the devils in hell, should by the permission of God, arm themselves against the Son of God. Surely this was a bitter ingredient in Christ’s cup.

6. The wrath of God himself; this, above all, was the most bitter dreg; it lay in the bottom, and Christ must drink it also. “The Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger;” God afflicts some in mercy, and some in anger, this was in his anger; and yet in his anger God is not alike to all; some he afflicts in his more gentle and mild, others in his fierce anger; this was in the very fierceness of his anger. Christ saw himself bearing the sins of all, and standing before the judgment-seat of God; to this end are those words, “Now is the judgment of this world, and the prince of this world shall be cast out.” Now is the judgment of this world, as if he had said, now I see God sitting in judgment upon the world; and as a right representative of all the world, here I stand

before his tribunal, ready to undergo all the punishment due to them for their sins. There is no other way to save their souls, and to satisfy justice, but that the fire of thy indignation should kindle against me. As if he had said, “I know it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God ; I know God is a consuming fire ; who can stand before his indignation ? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger ? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.” But for this end came I into the world. O my Father, I will drink this cup. Lo here an open breast ; come, prepare the armoury of thy wrath, and herein shoot all the arrows of revenge. And yet, O my Father, let me not be swallowed up by thy wrath : there is in me flesh and blood, in respect of my humanity, and “my flesh trembleth for fear of thee ; I am afraid of thy judgments :” O ! if it be possible, “if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”

#### SECT. V *Of the Agonies that Christ suffered.*

Christ’s passion in the garden was either before or at his apprehension ; his passion before is declared by his sorrow and by his sweat. 1 For his sorrow ; the evangelists diversely relate it ; “He began to be sorrowful and very heavy,” saith Matthew : “He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy,” saith Mark : “And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly,” saith Luke : “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say ? Father save me from this hour ; but for this cause came I unto this hour,” saith John. All avow this sorrow to be great, and so it is confessed by Christ himself : “Then saith he unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Ah, Christians ! who can speak out this sorrow ? “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear ?” Christ’s soul is sorrowful ; or, if that be too flat, his soul is exceeding sorrowful ; or, if that language be too low, his soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death ; such, and so great, as that

which is used to be at the very point of death ; and such as was sufficient to cause death itself, had not Christ been reserved to an heavier punishment. Many a sorrowful soul hath been in the world : but the like sorrow to this was never since the creation. Surely the bodily torments of the cross were inferior to this agony of his soul. It was a sorrow unspeakable.

2. And “ his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” (1.) His sweat was, as it were, blood. Here is the first step, his sweat was a wonderful sweat, not a sweat of water, but of red gore-blood. (2.) Great drops of blood, *Σρόμβοι αἵματος*. This bloody sweat of Christ came not from him in small dews, but in great drops ; they were drops, and great drops of blood, thick drops ; and hence it is concluded to have been preternatural ; for though in faint bodies a subtile thin blood, like sweat, may pass through the pores of the skin ; that through the same pores thick and great drops of blood should issue out, could not be without a miracle. (3.) They were “ great drops of blood, falling down to the ground ;” great drops, and those so many, that they went through his apparel, streaming down to the ground. Now was it that his garments were dyed with crimson. That of the prophet, though spoken in another sense, yet in some respect may be applied to this ; “ Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine vat ?” O what a sight was here ! His head and members are all in a bloody sweat, his sweat trickles down to the ground. O happy garden watered with such tears of blood ! how much better are these rivers than Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus ; yea, than all the waters of Israel ; yea, than all those rivers that watered the garden of Eden ?

Thus far of Christ’s passion before his apprehension. And now we may suppose it about midnight, the very time which Christ called “ the hour and power of darkness.” What followed from twelve till three at night, we shall discover in the next section.

**SECT. VI. *Of Judas's Treason, Christ's Apprehension, binding, and leading unto Annas.***

By this time, the traitor Judas was arrived at Gethsemane, and being near the garden-door, Jesus goes to his disciples, and calls them from their sleep: by an irony (as some think) he bids them "sleep on now, and take their rest;" meaning if they could; but withal adds, "Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners; arise, let us be going, behold he is at hand that doth betray me." That it might appear he undertook his sufferings with choice, he not only refused to flee, but calls his apostles to rise, that they might meet his murderers. And now they come "with swords and staves;" or, as John adds, "with lanterns and torches," and (Judas "going before them, and drawing near unto Jesus to kiss him) they took him, and bound him, and led him away to Annas first."

In this period, I shall observe, 1. Judas's treason. 2. Christ apprehension. 3. Christ's binding. 4. Christ's leading to Annas.

1. Judas's treason "And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him." This traitor is not a disciple only, but an apostle, not one of the seventy, but one of the twelve. Augustine speaks of many offices of love that Christ had done to Judas, in an especial manner; he had called him to be an apostle, made him his friend, his familiar, caused him to eat of his bread, and sit at his table. And that Judas should betray Christ! How doth this add to the sufferings of Christ? Behold a multitude, and Judas in the front. The evangelist gives the reason of this, that he might have the better opportunity to kiss him; this was the sign he gave the rout; "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, lay hold on him." He begins war with a kiss, and breaks the peace of his Lord by a symbol of kindness. Jesus takes this ill; "What, Judas! betrayest

thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" as if he had said, What, dost thou make the seal of love the sign of treachery? What a friendly reproof is here!

2. For Christ's apprehension; "then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him." Before they took him, he himself begins the inquiry, and leads them into their errand; he tells them, that he was Jesus of Nazareth, whom they sought. This was but a breath, a meek and gentle word; yet had it greater strength in it than the voice of thunder; for God was in that still voice, and it struck them to the ground. And yet he suffers them to rise again, and they still persist in their inquiry after him; he tells them once more, "I am he;" he offers himself to be sacrificed; only he sets them their bounds, and therefore he secures his apostles to be witnesses of his sufferings. In this work of redemption, no man must have an active share besides himself; he alone was to tread the wine-press; "If therefore ye seek me," (saith Christ) "let these go their way." Thus he permits himself to be taken, but not his disciples.

3. For Christ's being bound, the evangelist tells us, that "the band, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him," *εδησαν*, they bound his hands with cords; certainly they wanted no malice, and now they wanted no power, for the Lord had given himself into their hands. Being bound argues baseness. Fools and slaves were accustomed to be bound, and so were thieves; but is our Saviour numbered amongst any of these? O yes! "In that same hour, said Jesus to the multitude, are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?" O wonderful condescension of Christ! He that was eminently just, is reputed a thief; he that was equal with God, is become a servant; he that was stronger than Sampson, is bound with cords, and as a lamb, continues bound for the slaughter; and thus began our liberty from sin and death. Christ was faster bound with his cords of love, than with iron fetters; his love was strong as death; it overcame him who is invincible,

and bound him who is omnipotent ; the Jews' cords were but the symbols and figures ; but the dear love, the tender bowels of Jesus Christ were the things signified.

4. For his leading to Annas, John records, that “ they led him to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that same year.” (1.) They led him away ; ἀπήγαγον, they snatched, hauled him from the garden back again to Jerusalem, over the brook Cedron. (2.) They led him first to Annas ; he was chief of the Sanhedrim, father-in-law to Caiaphas, and high priest the next year following.—Come, Christians, let us lay our hands upon our hearts, and cry, “ O my pride ! O my covetousness ! O my malice and revenge ! O my unbelief ! O my unthankfulness ! O my uncharitableness to the needy members of Christ ! These were the rout, these were they that led, and dragged, and drew Jesus (as it were) by the hair of his head ; these were they that pulled him forwards, and shewed him in triumph to that bloody Annas ; nay, these were the Judas, Jews, Annas, and all. O that ever I should lodge within me such sins, such betrayers, such murderers of Jesus Christ !”

We may now suppose it about the third hour, or the last watch. In the gospel it is called the fourth watch of the night, the morning watch, which continueth until the morning.

#### SECT. VII. *Of Christ's Examination and Condemnation.*

Now it was that they led him from Annas to Caiaphas ; and presently a council is called of the high priests, scribes, and elders ; these were the greatest, gravest, learnedest, wisest men amongst them, and they all conspire to judge him, who is the great Judge both of quick and dead. In their proceedings we may observe, 1. The examination by the high priest. 2. The smiting by one of the servants. 3. The accusations of the witnesses. 4. The sentence of the judges. 5. The denial of Peter. 6. The abuses from the attendants.

1. For the examination by the high priest: “ The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.” (1.) Of his disciples. What the questions were, is not expressed; and to them he answered nothing. (2.) He asked him of his doctrine.—And to this question our Saviour answers; (O how wisely!) “ I spake openly to the world: I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing: why askest thou me? Ask them who heard me, what I said unto them: behold, they know what I said.” As if he had said, I appeal to the testimony of the enemies themselves. I tell the truth; I spake nothing in secret; that is, nothing in the least manner tending to sedition. Ask these mine enemies, these who have apprehended, and bound, and brought me hither: they know what I have said, let them speak, if they can, wherein I have transgressed the law.

2. For the stroke given Christ. “ One of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?” That holy face which was designed to be the object of heaven, was now smitten in the presence of a judge; and howsoever the assembly was full; yet not one amongst them all reproved the fact, or spake a word for Christ. If a subject should but lift up his hand against the son of an earthly sovereign, would he not be accounted worthy of punishment? How much more in this case, when the hand is lifted up against the King of kings, and Lord of lords? Come, look upon this lively and lovely picture of patience? he was struck on the face, but he was never moved in his heart. Notwithstanding the abuse, he shewed all mildness and gentleness towards his enemies. O what art thou, that canst not bear a distasteful speech, that canst not put up the smallest offence! Come, learn of Christ. If ever we mean to have a share in his sufferings, let us conform to him in meekness and patience.

3. For the accusations of the witnesses. He is falsely charged with the things that he never knew. In his

accusation I observe these things : 1. That they sought false witnesses ; for true witnesses they could have none : " Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witnesses against Jesus to put him to death." They were resolved in a former council that he should not live ; and now, palliating their design, they seek out for witnesses. 2. " Though many false witnesses came in to testify against him, yet they found none," because the things they witnessed " did not agree together." The judges seek out for witnesses, the witnesses for proof, those proofs for unity and consent, and nothing was ready for their purpose. 3. At last, after many attempts, " came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days." They accuse him for a figurative speech, which they could not understand. Observe their false report of the words he had spoken : he said not, " I am able to destroy this temple of God, and to build it in three days ;" but " destroy ye this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The allegation differs from the truth in these particulars. (1.) " I am able to destroy," say they ; " Destroy ye," saith Christ. (2.) " I am able to destroy this temple of God," say they ; but " destroy ye this temple," saith Christ ; simply this temple, without addition. (3.) " I am able to destroy this temple of God, and to build it in three days," say they ; " Destroy ye this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," saith Christ. He spoke not of building an external temple, but of raising up his own body. These were the accusations of the false witnesses, to all which Jesus answered nothing. But, (4.) Another accusation is brought in. Caiaphas had a reserve, which he knew would do the business in that assembly " I adjure thee," says he, " by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." The holy Jesus being adjured by so sacred a name, would not now refuse an answer, but confessed himself to be the " Christ, the Son of the living God." And this the high-priest was pleased (as

the design was laid,) to call blasphemy; and in token thereof he rends his clothes, prophetically signifying, that the priesthood should be rent from himself.

4. For the sentence of these judges: Caiaphas pre-judging all the Sanhedrim, in declaring Jesus to have spoken blasphemy, and the fact to be notorious, he then asked their votes, "What think ye? And they answered, and said, He is guilty of death." They durst not deny what Caiaphas had said; they knew his faction was very potent, and his malice great, and his heart was set upon the business, and therefore they all say, as he would have them, "He is guilty of death." But they had no power at that time to inflict death, they only declared him worthy of death.

5. For Peter's denial. While these things were thus acting, a damsel comes to him, and says, "Thou wast with Jesus of Galilee." And then another maid tells the bystanders, "This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth." And after awhile, they that stood by said themselves, "Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee :" as if they had said, Thy very idiom of speech declares thee to be a Galilean. Peter thus surprised, shamefully denies his Lord: and, 1. He doth it with a kind of subterfuge, "I know not what thou sayest." He seems to elude the accusation with this evasion, I know not thy meaning. 2. At the next turn, he goes on denying Christ "with an oath, I know not the man." And, lastly, he aggravates his sin so far, that he denies his Lord with cursing and swearing, "I know not the man." Here is a lie, an oath, and a curse. O Peter, is the Man so vile that thou wilt not own him! Hadst thou not before confessed him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God? And dost thou not know him to be man as well as God? Is not this the God-man that called thee and thy brother Andrew at the sea of Galilee, saying, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men?" Is not this he whom thou sawest on mount Tabor, shining more gloriously than the sun? Is not this he whom thou sawest walking on the water, and to whom thou saidst, "Lord, if it be thou,

bid me come unto thee on the water?" How is it then that thou sayest, "I know not the man?" Surely here is a sad example of human infirmity; and withal, a blessed example of repentance. No sooner the cock crew, and Christ gave a look on Peter, but "he goes out, and weeps bitterly." Let us learn hence to think modestly and soberly of ourselves: "Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall." If Peter could first dissemble, and then lie, and then forswear, and then blaspheme and curse, O let us not be "high-minded, but fear." And in case we fall indeed, as Peter did, yet let us not despair, as Judas did; but still, upon our repentance, let us trust in God.

6. For the abuses the base attendants offered to Christ. The evangelist tells us, "Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?" And, as Luke adds, "Many other things blasphemously spake they against him." (1.) They spit in his face. This was accounted among the Jews a matter of great infamy and reproach. (2.) They buffet him. We heard before, that one of the officers struck Jesus with the palm of his hand; but now they buffet him. (3.) They covered his face, Mark xiv. 65. Several reasons are rendered for it; that they might smite him more boldly, and without shame. (4.) They smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, "Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?" Some reckon these taunts amongst the bitterest passages of his passion. Nothing is more miserable, even to the greatest misery, than to see itself scorned of enemies.

Consider, Christians, whether we had not a hand in these abuses. (1.) They spit in the face of Christ who defile his image in their souls. (2.) They buffet him who persecute Christ in his members; "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (3.) They mock and scoff at Christ who scorn his messengers. "He that despiseth

you despiseth me," saith Christ. O that we would lay these things to our hearts, and observe wherein we stand guilty of these sins, that we may repent. You that take your name from Christ, how should you admire the immensity of this love of Christ? Was it a small thing that the wisdom of God should become the foolishness of men, and scorn of men, and contempt of the world, for your sin's sake? O think of this!

And now the dismal night is done, what remains but that we follow Christ, and observe him in his sufferings the next day. The Psalmist tells us, "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning:" only Christ can find none of this joy neither morning nor evening; for after a dismal night he meets with as dark a day.

## CHAP. II.

### *SECT. I. Of Christ's Indictment, and Judas's fearful End.*

ABOUT six in the morning, Jesus was brought unto Pilate's house. "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the judgment-hall, and it was early.—When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: and when they had bound him, and led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor; then Judas which had betrayed him, hanged himself." O the readiness of our nature to evil! When the Israelites would sacrifice to the golden calf, they "rose up early in the morning." If God leave us to ourselves, we are as ready to practise mischief as the fire is to burn. The transactions of this hour I shall consider in these two passages, Christ's indictment, and Judas's fearful end.

In Christ's indictment we may observe, his accusation and his examination. In his accusation we may observe, 1. Who are his accusers. 2. Where he was accused. 3. What was the matter of which they accuse him.

1. His accusers were the chief priests and elders of the people. The very same that before had judged him guilty of death, are now his accusers before the temporal judge. But why must our Saviour be twice judged? Was not the Sanhedrim, or ecclesiastical court, sufficient to condemn him? I answer, he is twice judged, (1.) That his innocence might more appear. (2.) Because, said the Jews, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." The Romans had come and restrained the Jews from the execution of their laws. 2. The place of the accusation was at the door of the house. "They would not go into the judgment-hall lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover." They are scrupulous respecting a ceremony, but make no conscience of shedding innocent blood! They are precise about such matters of the law; but mercy, judgment, fidelity, and the love of God, they let them pass disregarded. 3. The matter of which they accuse him. (1.) That he seduced the people. (2.) That he forbad to pay tribute to Cæsar. (3.) That he said he was a king. How great, but withal how false were these accusations!

For his examination. Pilate was nothing moved with any of the accusations, saving the third; and therefore letting all the rest pass, he asked him only, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" To whom Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world." By which Pilate knew well that Christ was no enemy to Cæsar. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, his government is in the hearts of men, and what is this to Cæsar? How many lessons may we learn from hence? 1. Christ is accused, who then can be free? The chief priests and elders of the Jews accused Christ. No wonder if those that are chief and great among us accuse poor Christians. There is a perpetual enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; an everlasting, irreconcilable, implacable enmity. 2. Christ was examined only of his usurpation: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" The men of this world mind only worldly things. Pilate

regards not Christ's doctrine; but he is afraid lest he should aspire to the kingdom; and concerning this our Saviour puts him out of doubt, "My kingdom is not of this world." O eternity! to be for ever in heaven with God and Christ, how should this swallow up all other thoughts and aims?

"Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself." There is a repentance that comes too late. In hell men shall repent to all eternity, and such a repentance was this of Judas. About midnight he had received his money in the house of Annas, and now betimes in the morning he repents his bargain, and throws his money back again. The end of this tragedy was, that Judas died a miserable death; he perished by his own hands. "He went and hanged himself." And "he fell headlong, and burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." Who would die such a death for the pleasure of a little sin? The Lord keep our souls from betraying Christ, and from despairing in God's mercy through Christ. Amen, Amen!

#### • SECT. II. *Of Christ's Mission to Herod.*

About seven in the morning, Jesus was sent to Herod, "who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time." The reason of this was, because Pilate had heard that Christ was a Galilean; and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, he concludes that Christ must be under his jurisdiction. "Herod was glad; for he was desirous to see Christ of a long season, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him." That which I shall observe in this passage is,

1. Herod's questioning of Jesus Christ. 2. Christ's silence to all his questions. 3. Herod's derision; and Christ's dismission back again to Pilate. (1.) Herod questioned with him in many words. Herod could not abide to hear his word, but he was well content to see the miracles of Christ. (2.) Whatever his questions were,

“ He answered him nothing.” Herod had been sottishly careless of Jesus Christ ; he lived in the place where Jesus more especially had conversed, yet never had seen his person, or heard his sermons. It gives us to learn thus much, that if we refuse to hear the voice of Christ in the time of mercy, Christ may refuse to speak to us in our time of need. (3.) This silence they interpret for simplicity ; and so, “ Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.” They arrayed him with a white, glittering, gorgeous raiment. The meaning of Herod was not so much to declare his innocence as his folly. In this posture they sent him away again to Pilate ; to all their former derisions they added this, that now he was exposed in scorn to the boys of the streets.

Was the uncreated wisdom of the Father reputed a fool ? No wonder if we suffer thousands of reproaches. “ We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men ; we are fools for Christ’s sake. We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.” Christians must wear the badge and livery of Jesus Christ : we cannot expect to fare better than our Master. I never knew Christians in better temper than when they were styled puritans, hypocrites, formalists, or the like. Let us not judge of men by their outside garments. Wisdom is often clad in the coat of a fool. Let us admire the condescension of Christ, who came down from heaven to teach us wisdom. Wisdom itself was content to be counted a fool, that those who are accounted “ the foolish of the world,” might be wise to salvation.

Do not we set Christ at naught ? Do not we mock him, and array him in a gorgeous robe ? Whatsoever we do to one of the least of his saints, he tells us that we do it to himself, Matt. xxv. 40, 45, and have we not dealt thus with his saints ? Have we not dealt thus with his ministers ? When Elisha was going up to Bethel,

“there came little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head ; go up, thou bald head.” A reproach of bald head, or round head, given to a faithful Elisha, or a minister of Christ, proclaims you as bad as those little children, yea, as bad as Herod and his men of war. Such Herods were a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. Some there were then “that mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.”

*SECTR. III. Of Christ and Barabbas compared ; and of the Question debated betwixt Pilate and the Jews.*

About eight in the morning Christ is returned to Pilate, who propounded to the Jews whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas loosed unto them. “Ye have a custom (saith he) that I should release unto you one at the pass-over, will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews ? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.” It is supposed that in this passage Pilate endeavoured Christ’s liberty ; “he knew that for envy they had delivered him,” and he saw that Herod had sent him back uncondemned ; and therefore now he propounds this medium to rescue him. “Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ ?” In prosecution of this passage I shall observe, 1. Who this Barabbas was. 2. What is the difference betwixt him and Christ. 3. How they vote. 4. Pilate’s query upon the vote. 5. Their answer to his query. 6. His reply unto their answer. 7 Their reduplication upon his reply.

1. For the first, What was this Barabbas ? “One that had made insurrection, and committed murder in the insurrection,” Mark xv. 7 One that was the greatest malefactor of his time ; and must he be taken, and Jesus

east? 2. For the second, what the difference is betwixt him and Christ. Let us weigh them in the balance, and we may find, (1.) Barabbas was a thief, and by violence took away the bread of the needy, but Christ was a feeder and supplier of their needs. (2.) Barabbas was a murderer, and had slain the living; but Christ was the Saviour, restoring life unto the dead. (3.) Barabbas was a man of blood, but Christ was of a meek and quiet spirit. Here is a competition indeed, the author of sedition with the Prince of Peace; a murderous mutineer with a merciful Mediator; a son of Belial with the Son of God. 3. For their votes, they give them in thus: "Not this man, but Barabbas." A strange vote, to desire the wolf before the Lamb, the noxious and violent before the righteous and innocent. 4. For Pilate's query upon the vote, "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" There is more pity in Pilate than in all the Jews. In some things Pilate did justly; as first, he would not condemn him before his accusations were brought in; nor then neither, before he was convicted of some capital crime. And because he perceives that it was envy that drove on their design, he endeavours to save his life by balancing him with Barabbas; and now he sees that they prefer Barabbas before Jesus, he puts forth the question, "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" As if he had said, I know not what to do with him, it is against my light to condemn him to death, who is of innocent life. 5. "And they all said unto him, Let him be crucified." This was the first time that they spake openly their design. It had long lurked within them, that he must die a cursed death, and now their envy breaks out. The cross was a gradual and slow death, it spun out pain into a long thread, and therefore they make choice of it, as they make choice of Jesus; let him die rather than Barabbas, and let him die the death of the cross rather than any speedy death. 6. For Pilate's reply unto this answer, "Why, what evil hath he done?" Some-

times the Jews themselves could say, “ He hath done all things well, he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.” Surely he hath done all things well ; he stilled the winds, and calmed the seas ; he raised the dead ; he gave grace, and he forgave sins ; and by his death he merited for his saints everlasting life : why then should he die, that hath done all things well ? No wonder that Pilate objects against these malicious ones, “ What evil hath he done ? ” 7. “ But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.” Instead of proving some evil against him, “ they cried out the more ; they were instant with loud voices : ” they made such a clamour that the earth rang with it. And now is Pilate threatened into another opinion, they require his judgment ; and the voices of them, and of the chief priests prevailed : so it follows, “ and when he saw he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, then Barabbas was released unto them, and Jesus delivered to be scourged.”

Now first give me leave to look amongst ourselves : are there not some amongst us that prefer Barabbas before Jesus ? O, yes ! those that listen to that old mutinous murderer in his seditious temptations ; those that reject the blessed motions of God’s own Spirit in his tenders and offers of grace ; those that embrace the world, with its pleasures and profits, and make them their portion ; all these choose Barabbas, and reject Jesus Christ. And, secondly, give me leave to look on the love and mercy of God in Christ. Our Jesus was not only content to take our nature upon him, but to be compared with the greatest malefactor of those times ; and by publick sentence to be pronounced more worthy of death than Barabbas ! O the love of Christ ! He died that we might live. It was the voice of God, as well as men, Release Barabbas, every believing Barabbas, and crucify Jesus.

**SECT. IV. *Christ scourged, clothed in purple, and crowned with thorns.***

About nine, (which the Jews called the third hour of the day,) was Christ scourged, clothed with purple, and crowned with thorns.

1. When Pilate saw how the Jews were set upon his death, he consented. "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers, and they stripped him." They pulled off his clothes, and made him stand naked before them all. He that adorns the heaven with stars, and the earth with flowers, is now himself stripped naked. 2. Pilate gave him to be scourged. This some think he did on no other account, but that the Jews might rest satisfied, and so desist from taking away his life. That Pilate might give him to be scourged on that account is very probable; because, after the scourging, he brings him out to the Jews, proclaiming, "I find no fault in him." And, before his scourging, he speaks it more expressly, "He hath done nothing worthy of death, I will therefore chastise him, and release him." We may read here a lecture of the immense love of God in Christ to us poor Gentiles. Was there ever love like unto this love? Had he not been God as well as man, he could never have had in his heart such a love as this. It was a Divine love; a love far surpassing either the love of men, or women, or angels. 3. They put upon him a purple robe, or a scarlet robe. John calls it purple, and Matthew scarlet. Howsoever some difference may be, yet, because of their likeness, they are put sometimes the one for the other. It is in the original, a scarlet cloak. It was a loose short garment, at first only used by kings or emperors, and the colour of it was suitable to Christ's condition, for he was now purple all over. His body and his garment were both of a deep-dyed sanguine colour. What is his scarlet garment, but the emblem of his wounded body? that, as he spake of the woman, "she

anointed him aforehand unto his burial ;" so Pilate, in the mystery, clothes him aforehand unto his bloody death. 4. "They platted a crown of thorns, and put it upon his head." A goodly crown for the King of kings ! We read of many sorts of crowns, as of the triumphal, laurel, naval, mural, but never till this did we read of a crown of thorns. A crown it was to deride him, and a crown of thorns to torment him. In this we may read both his pain and shame. After they had put it upon his head, "they took a reed and smote him on the head :" that is, they smote him on the head to fasten the crown of thorns upon him surer, and to imprint it deeper.

How many lessons might we draw from hence ? They put upon his head a crown of shame, of death, of torture ; who came to give us a crown of victory, of life, of glory. O what a shame is it for any of us to crown our heads with rose-buds, to spend our time in vanity, folly, sin, when Christ our Lord had such a crown of thorns put on his sacred head ? The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord : "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord." If our Lord and Master was crowned with thorns, surely the members of Christ should not be soft, delicate, effeminate, sensual, or given up to pleasures.

#### SECT. V. *Of Christ brought forth, and sentenced.*

About ten Christ was brought forth, and sentenced. 1. For his being brought forth, I shall observe these particulars : (1.) We find Pilate bringing forth Jesus out of the common hall, and shewing this sad spectacle to the people. "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, and Pilate saith unto them, Behold the Man !" He thought the very sight of Christ would have moved them with compassion ; they had lashed him almost unto death, they had clothed him with purple, crowned him with thorns ; and now he is brought out, and exposed to public view, Pilate crying, "Behold the Man !" As if

he had said, "Behold a poor, miserable, distressed man. Behold how he stands disfigured with wounds ; behold him weltering in his own blood : and let this sufficient, yea, more than sufficient punishment, suffice to satisfy your rage." (2.) We find the Jews more enraged against Jesus : "When the chief priests and officers saw him, they cried, saying, Crucify him ! crucify him !" O ye Jews, children of Israel, seed of Abraham, is not this concerning whom your fathers cried, "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence ?" How is it that you should despise him present, whom they desired absent ? How is it that your cry and theirs should be so contrary ? (3.) We find Pilate and the Jews yet debating the business ; Pilate is loath to pronounce the sentence, and the chief of the Jews provoke him to it with a three-fold argument. As, first, "They had a law, and by their law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." The text tells us, that Pilate "hearing this argument, was the more afraid." Pilate (saith Cyril) was an heathen idolater, and so worshipping many gods, he could not tell but that Christ might be one of them. This was the meaning of Pilate's question, "Whence art thou ?" Of what progenitors art thou sprung ? "And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him." Secondly, the Jews used another argument, they threatened Pilate, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend :" a forcible reason, as the case then stood. It was no small matter to be accused of high treason against Cæsar, and therefore under this obligation Pilate seems to bend. Whom the fear of Christ's divinity had restrained, him the fear of Cæsar's frown provoked to go on. And yet, before he gives sentence, "he takes water, and washeth his hands before the multitude ; saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it." In reference to this, they engaged themselves for him, which was their last argument ; "His blood be upon us, and our children." Thus far of the first general.

2. For the sentence itself, "When Pilate heard that, he sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement," because erected of stones ; "but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha." This word signifies an *high place*, and *raised above*; it was so on purpose, that the judges might be seen when they pronounced sentence. And here Pilate sitting down, "gave sentence, that it should be as they required :" and then "he delivered Jesus to their will."

From this sight of Christ, as he was presented by Pilate to the people, we may learn remorse. There are not any of us, who have crucified Christ by our sins, but are called on at this time, to "behold the man." Suppose we saw him with our bodily eyes ; suppose we had the same view of Christ that the Jews had, when he was thus presented ; suppose we saw him in the midst of us, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, and the reed held in his right hand ; suppose we heard the voice of Pilate speaking to us, as he did to the Jews, "Behold the Man !" suppose we saw the purple robe lifted up, that we might see all under how his body was torn ; and that same voice from heaven should come to us, saying, "This same is he whom ye have buffeted, scourged, crowned, crucified with your sins !" Were not this enough to prick us in our hearts, and to make us cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do ?" We look on Pilate, on the soldiers, on the Jews ; but we look not to our sins, saying, Could we but realize our sins as the principal cause of these sufferings of Christ, methinks our hearts should break. Consider, yesterday so many lies were told, and so many oaths were sworn ; little did we think that all this while we had been stripping Christ naked, whipping Christ with rods, clothing Christ with a purple-scarlet robe, plating a crown of thorns, and putting it on his head, sceptering him with a reed, and saluting him with scorn, "Hail, King of the Jews !" Men, brethren, and fathers, be not deceived, Christ is mocked, scorned, and thus abused by you when you sin ; your sins thus dealt

with Christ, and in God's acceptation your sins thus deal with Christ even unto this day. Never say, it was long since Christ was crucified, and he is now in heaven, for by your sins you crucify again the Lord of glory, you put him again to open shame. O look on him whom you have pierced! Pilate thought, that if the Jews would but "behold the man," their hearts would be mollified; and shall not I think as well of you? It is a blessed means to make sin bitter, and to breed in our hearts remorse for sin, if we will but hearken to this voice of Pilate, "Behold the Man!"

#### SECT. VI. *Of Christ's crucifixion.*

About eleven, they prepare with all speed for the execution. In this hour we may observe these several passages. 1. Their taking off the robe, and clothing him again with his own raiment. 2. Their leading him away from Gabbatha to Golgotha; bearing the cross, with Simon's help. 3. His comforting the women who followed weeping. 4. Their giving him vinegar to drink mingled with gall. 5. Their crucifying, or fastening him on the cross.

1. The evangelist tells us, "They took the robe off from him, and they put his own raiment on him." Origen observes, "They took off his robes, but they took not off his crown of thorns." It is supposed this small business could not be done without great pain; after his sore whipping, his blood congealed, and by that means stuck to his scarlet mantle; so that in pulling off the robe, and putting on his raiment, there could not but be a renewing of his wounds.

2. "They led him away, bearing his cross." They had scarce left him so much blood or strength as to carry himself, and must he now bear his heavy cross! Yes, till he faint and sink, so long he must bear it, and longer too, did they not fear that he should die with less shame and smart than they intended him; which to prevent,

“ they constrained one Simon, a Cyrenian, to bear his cross after him.” Crucifixion was a Roman death, and so one of their abominations ; hence they themselves would not touch the tree of infamy, lest they should have been defiled ; but to touch the Lord’s Anointed, to crucify the Lord of glory, they made no scruple at all.

3. He comforted the women, who followed weeping. “ And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him ; but Jesus, turning to them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” In the midst of his misery he forgets not mercy ; in the midst of all their tortures and scorn, he can hear his following friends weeping behind him, and neglect all his own sufferings to comfort them. He hath more compassion on the women that follow him weeping, than on his own mangled self, fainting and bleeding unto death. He feels more the tears that drop from their eyes, than all the blood that flows from his own veins. We heard before, that he would not vouchsafe a word to Pilate that threatened him, nor to Herod that entreated him ; and yet, unasked, how graciously doth he turn about his bleeding face to these weeping women, affording them looks and words too both of compassion and of consolation, “ Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves.” And yet observe, he did not turn his face to them until he heard them weep ; nor may we think to see his face in glory, unless we first bathe our eyes in sorrow. It is a wonder to me, that any in our age should ever decry tears, remorse, contrition, compunction. How many saints do we find, both in the Old and New Testament, confuting by their practices those gross opinions ? The promise tells us, “ They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy ;” he that follows Christ, or “ goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

But what is the meaning of this, “ Weep not for me ?”

May we not weep for the death of Christ? Do we not find in Scripture that all the people wept at the death of Moses? that all the church wept at the death of Stephen? that the women lamented the death of Dorcas? And did not Christ himself weep for Lazarus, and Jerusalem? Nay, is he not here weeping showers of blood all along the way? O what is the meaning of this, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves?" I answer, the words are not absolute, but comparative. Christ doth not simply forbid us to weep for our friends, but rather to turn our worldly grief into godly sorrow for sin. Christ pointed the women to the true cause of all their sorrow, which was their sins; and thus we have cause to weep indeed. Our sins were the cause of the sufferings of Christ; and in that respect, O that our heads were fountains, and our eyes rivers of tears! O that the Lord would strike these rocky hearts of ours with the rod of true remorse, that water might gush out! O that we could thus mourn over Jesus, whom we have pierced, and be in bitterness for him, as "one that is in bitterness for his first-born."

4. No sooner was he come to the place of execution, "but they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall." This was a custom amongst Jews and Romans, that to the condemned they ever gave wine to drink. But in that they gave him vinegar mingled with gall, it was an argument of their cruelty and envy.

5. "They crucified him;" that is, they fastened him to the cross; and then lifted him up. What I mean to observe of this crucifying of Christ, I shall reduce to these two heads, viz. the shame and pain. (1.) For the shame, it was a cursed death, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." When it was in use, it was chiefly inflicted upon slaves, that either falsely accused, or treacherously conspired their master's death; but on whomsoever it was inflicted, this death, in all ages among the Jews, hath been branded with a special kind of ignominy; and so the apostle signifies when he saith, "He abased himself

to the death, even to the death of the cross.” (2.) For the pain, it was a painful death, as appears several ways. 1. His legs and hands were violently racked, and pulled out to the places fitted for fastening them, and then pierced through with nails. 2. By this means he wanted the use both of his hands and feet, and so was forced to hang immovable upon the cross, as being unable to turn any way for ease. 3. The longer he lived, the more he endured; for by the weight of his body his wounds were opened and enlarged, his nerves and veins were rent and torn asunder, and his blood gushed out more and more. 4. He died by inch-meal, as I may say, and not at once: the cross kept him a great while upon the rack. It was full three hours betwixt Christ’s affixion and expiration; and it would have been longer if he had not freely and willingly given up the ghost. It is reported that Andrew the apostle was two whole days upon the cross before he died; and so long might Christ have been, if God had not heightened it to greater degrees of torment.

I may add, as above all this, the pains of his soul while he hung on the cross; for there also Christ had his agonies and conflicts; these were those *ωδίνες θανάτου, pains of death*; from which Peter tells us Christ was loosed. The word *ωδίνες* properly signifies the pain of a woman in travail; such were the pains of Jesus Christ in death. The prophet calls it, *the travail of his soul*. And the psalmist calls it, *the pains of hell*: “The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.” The sorrows, or cords of death, compassed his body, and the pains of hell gat hold upon his soul. And these were they that extorted from him that passionate expostulation, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He complains of that which was more grievous to him than ten thousand deaths, “My God, my God, why hast thou withdrawn thy wonted presence, and left my soul (as it were) in hell!”

And now we reflect on the shame and pain: O the curse and bitterness that our sins have brought on Jesus

Christ! When I but think on these bleeding veins, scourged sides, furrowed back, harrowed temples, digged hands and feet, and then consider that my sins were the cause of all; methinks I should need no more arguments for self-abhorring. Christians, would not your hearts rise against him that should kill your father, mother, brother, wife, husband? O then, how should your hearts and souls rise against sin? Surely sin it was that murdered Christ, that killed him who is instead of all relations, who is a thousand times dearer to you than father, mother, husband, child. One thought of this should, methinks, be enough to make you say, as Job did, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes." O, what is that cross on the back of Christ? My sins. O, what is that crown on the head of Christ? My sins. O, what that nail in the right hand, and that other in the left hand of Christ? My sins. O, what that spear in the side of Christ? My sins. O, what are those nails and wounds in the feet of Christ? My sins. With a spiritual eye, I see no other engine tormenting Christ; no other Pilate, Herod, Annas, Caiaphas, condemning Christ; no other soldiers, officers, Jews or gentiles, doing execution on Christ, but only sin, O my sins, my sins!

Comfort we ourselves in the end of this death of Christ; "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Without this consideration, the contemplation of Christ's death would be altogether unprofitable. Now what was the end? Surely this, Christ was lifted up, that he might draw all men unto him: Christ hung on a tree, that he might bear our sins on the tree. This was the plot which God aimed at in the crucifying of Christ; and thus our faith must take it up. Indeed our comfort hangs on this. The design of Christ in his sufferings is that welcome news, O remember this, Christ is crucified! And why so? That "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

**SECT. VII. *Of the Consequents of Christ's Crucifixion.***

1. About twelve, when the sun is usually brightest, it began now to darken. This darkness was so great, that it spread over all the land of Jewry: some think, over all the world: so we translate it in Luke; "And there was darkness over all the earth:" And many gentiles, besides Jews, observed the same as a great miracle. The cause of this darkness is diversly rendered by several authors. Some think, that the sun, by Divine power, withdrew, and held back its beams. Whatsoever was the cause, it continued for the space of three hours as dark as the darkest winter's night.

2. About three, which the Jews called the ninth hour, the sun now beginning to receive his light, "Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And then, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he said, 'I thirst.' And when he had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished.' And, at last, crying with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." I cannot dwell on these seven words of Christ, which he uttered on the cross: his words were ever gracious, but never more gracious than at this time. We cannot find, in all the books of men, in all the records of time, either such sufferings or such sayings as were these last sayings and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

3. About four in the afternoon he was pierced with a spear, and there issued out of his side both blood and water. "And one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water." This was a fountain of both sacraments, the fountain of all our happiness, "the fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." "There are three that bear witness on earth," saith John, "the Spirit, the water, and the blood." Out of the side of Christ, being now dead, there

issues water and blood ; signifying that he is the cause of both our justification and sanctification.

4. About five (which the Jews call the eleventh, and the last hour of the day,) Christ was taken down, and buried by Joseph and Nicodemus.

Thus far we have propounded the blessed object of Christ's suffering and dying for us. Our next work is to direct you how to look unto him in this respect.

### CHAP. III.

#### SECT. I. *Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Death.*

1. LET us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. This is the high point which Paul was ever studying : preaching, "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Christ crucified is the rarest piece of knowledge in the world. The person of Christ is a matter of high speculation ; but Christ farther considered, as clothed with his garments of flesh and blood, is that knowledge which especially Paul pursues. He esteems not, determines not to make any profession of, any other science or doctrine. O my soul, how many days, and months, and years hast thou spent to attain some little measure of knowledge in the arts, and tongues, and sciences ? And yet what a poor skill hast thou attained in respect of the many thousands of them that knew nothing at all of Jesus Christ ? And what if thou hadst reached a greater proficiency ? Couldst thou have dived into the secrets of nature ? Couldst thou have excelled " the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt, and the wisdom of Solomon, who spake of beasts, of fowls, of fishes, of all trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall," yet without the saving

knowledge of Christ crucified, (Christ suffering, bleeding, and dying,) all this had been nothing. See Eccl. i. 18; and above all, that is the rarest which shews him suffering for us, and so freeing us from hell-sufferings. Come then and spend thy time for the future more fruitfully in reading, learning, knowing, this one necessary thing. Study it therefore, but be sure thy study and knowledge be rather practical than speculative. Do not merely learn the history of Christ's death, but the efficacy, virtue, and merit of it. Know what thou knowest in reference to thyself, as if Jesus had been all the while carrying on the business of thy soul's salvation; as if thou hadst stood by, and Christ had spoke to thee, as to the woman, "Weep not for me, but for thyself; thy sins cause my sufferings, and my sufferings are for the abolition of thy sins."

### SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," saith the prophet; that is, they shall consider me: and accordingly the apostle was looking unto Jesus, or considering Jesus, "the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame." It is good in all respects, and under all considerations, to look unto Jesus from first to last; but, above all, this text relates to the time of his sufferings: and hence it is that Luke calls Christ's passion  $\vartheta\epsilon\omega\varphi\alpha\nu$ , a theory or sight; "And all the people that came together to that sight, smote their breasts and returned." Not but that every particular respecting Christ is a sight, worthy our looking on, or considering; Christ in his Father's purpose, Christ in the promise, Christ in the performance; Christ in his birth, and Christ in his life. O what blessed objects are these to look upon! But, above all, "consider him, (saith the apostle,) "that en-

dured such contradiction of sinners against himself.— Consider him, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame.” Of all other parts, acts, or passages of Christ, the Holy Ghost hath only honoured Christ’s passion (his sufferings and death,) with this name, *theory and sight*. O then let us look on this, consider this.

1. Consider him passing over the brook Cedron. It signifies the wrath of God and rage of men. Through many tribulations must they go, that will follow after him to the kingdom of glory. Consider him entering into the garden of Gethsemane: in a garden Adam sinned, and in this garden Christ must suffer. Into this garden no sooner was he entered, but he began to be agonized. All his powers within him were in conflict. Consider, O my soul, how suddenly he is struck into a strange fear. Never was man so afraid of the torments of hell, as Christ, standing in our room, is of his Father’s wrath; nor was he only afraid, but very heavy. “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” His sorrow was deadly, it melted his soul as wax is melted with heat. It continued with him till his last gasp; his heart was like wax burning all the time of his passion. Nor was he only afraid and heavy, but he began to be sore amazed. This signifies an universal cessation of all the faculties of the soul from their several functions. We usually call it a consternation. It is like a clock stopped for the while from going by some hand or other laid upon it; such a motion of the mind, that for the present he was disabled to mind any thing else, but the dreadful sense of the wrath of God. O what an agony was this! what a struggling passion of mixed grief! “O, my Father! thou hast bent thy bow; lo! here an open breast, fix herein all thy shafts; better I suffer for awhile, than that all men should be damned for ever: thy will is mine: lo! I will bear the burden of sin: shoot here thy arrows of revenge.” And thus, as he prayed, he sweat, “And his sweat was, as it were great drops of blood falling

down to the ground." O what man or angel can conceive the agony, the fear, the sorrow, the amazement of heart, that, without all outward violence, bled through the flesh and skin; not some faint dew, but solid drops of blood? O, my soul, consider this, and if thou wilt bring this consideration home, say thy sins were the cause of this bloody sweat.

2. Consider his apprehension. Judas is now at hand, with a troop following him. See how, without all shame, he sets himself in the van, and coming to his Lord and Master, gives him a most traitorous kiss: "What, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" Hast thou sold the Lord of life to such cruel merchants as covet greedily his blood? At what price hast thou set the Lord of all the creatures? At thirty pence? What a slender price for the Lord of glory. At that time, said Christ, "ye become as against a thief, with swords and staves; I sat daily among you teaching in the temple, and ye never laid hands on me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Now the prince of darkness exercised his power; now the most ravenous wolves assaulted the most innocent Lamb in the world. Now they furiously haled him this way and that way. What cries, and shouts, and clamours made they over him? Now they lay hold on his holy hands, and bind them hard with rough and knotty cords. Now they bring him back again over Cedron. Now they lead him openly through the streets of Jerusalem, and carry him to the house of Annas in triumph. O, my soul, consider these several particulars leisurely, and with good attention, till thou feelest some motions in thy affection. He that is fairer than all the children of men, is besmeared with weeping, and troubled with sorrow of heart. Surely, there is something, O my soul, in thee, that caused all this. Hadst not thou sinned, the Sun of Righteousness had never been eclipsed.

3. Consider the hurrying of Jesus from Annas to Caiaphas. There a council is called, and Caiaphas, the

high-priest, adjures our Lord to tell him, if he was Christ the Son of God? No sooner he affirms it, but he is doomed guilty of blasphemy. Now again they disgorge all their malice and revenge; each one gives him buffets and strokes. They spit upon that Divine face, they hoodwink his eyes, and strike him on the cheek, scoffing and jesting, and saying, "Who is it that smote thee?" O my soul, why dost thou not humble thyself at this so wonderful example? How is it that there should remain in the world any token of pride after this so marvellous example of humility? I am astonished this so great patience overcomes not my anger, this so great abasing assuageth not my pride, these so violent buffets beat not down my presumption! Jesus Christ by these means should overthrow the kingdom of pride, and yet that there should remain in me the relics of pride! Consider all those night-sufferings of Christ; now was the season that all creatures should take their rest. All the night long Christ is tormented by thy sins. Not one jot of rest hath Christ, whom thou, by the alarm of thy sins, disquieted, both at evening, at midnight, and at the cock-crow, and at the dawning.

4. Consider the hurryings of Christ from Caiaphas to Pilate. Now he stands before Pilate, where he was accused of sedition and usurpation. Not only Jews, but Gentiles, have their hands imbrued in the blood of Christ: Pilate was delegated from Cæsar, yet not without a prophecy; "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles." At the Gentile tribunal, being questioned of his kingdom, he answers both the Jews and Gentiles, that they need not fear his usurpation, "My kingdom is not of this world." He gives kingdoms that are eternal; but he will take away none that are temporal. Christ came not into the world to be Cæsar's, or Pilate's, or Herod's successor; but, if they had believed, to have been their Saviour. O that I could but

contemn the world as Christ did ! O that I could seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ! O my soul, I feel it, unless I can be free from the affection of all creatures, I cannot with freedom of mind aspire unto Divine things ; unless I be willing with Christ to be despised and forsaken of all, I can have no inward peace, nor be spiritually enlightened, nor be wholly united unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Consider the hurrying of Jesus from Pilate to Herod. There is he questioned of many things, but justly is the Lamb of God dumb, and opened not his mouth ; upon this he is mocked, and arrayed in a gorgeous robe. Wisdom is taken for folly, and the Saviour of sinners for a sinner. See how he emptied himself, and made himself of no reputation, that he might fill thee with goodness, and make thee wise unto salvation.

6. Consider the hurrying of Jesus from Herod back again to Pilate. O my Saviour, how art thou now abused ! New accusations are forged ; and when Pilate sees that nothing will do, but Christ must die, he delivers him to be stripped, whipped, clothed in purple, crowned with thorns, and sceptred with a reed. Who can number the stripes wherewith they tore his body, one wound eating into another ? O my heart, how can I think of this without tears of blood ? O joy of angels, and glory of saints, who hath thus defiled thee with so many bloody blows ! Certainly they were not thy sins, but mine. Love was the cause why thou didst bestow upon me all thy benefits, and mercy moved thee to take upon thee all my miseries.

7. Consider that sad spectacle of Jesus, when "he came forth wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, and Pilate saying unto them, Behold the Man." O my soul, fix thy eyes on the sad object ! Suppose thyself in the case of Jesus ; what if in so sensible and tender a part as thy head is, men should fasten a number of thorns ? Alas ! thou canst hardly abide the prick of a pin, much less the piercing of so many thorns. O,

but thy Jesus was crowned with thorns, and sceptred with a reed, and that reed was taken out of his hands, to beat the crown of thorns into his head ; thy Jesus was whipped with cords and rods ; and being in this plight thou art called to "behold the man." Canst thou consider him at present, as if thou hadst a view of this very Man ? Methinks it would make thee break out and say, "O the brightness of thy Father's glory, who hath thus cruelly dealt with thee ? O unspotted Glass of the majesty of God, who hath thus wholly disfigured thee ? O River that flows out of the paradise of delights, who hath thus troubled thee ? Is it my sins, O Lord, that have so troubled thee : my sins were the thorns that pricked thee, the lashes that whipped thee, the purple that clothed thee. It is I, Lord, that am thy tormentor, and the very cause of these thy pains."

8. Consider Pilate's sentence, that Jesus should be crucified as the Jews required. Now they had him in their will, and they did to him what seemed them good. Follow him from Gabbatha to Golgotha. See how they lay the heavy cross upon his tender shoulders, that were so rent and torn with whips. Accompany him all the way to the execution, and help to carry his cross to mount Calvary ; and there see him lifted up on that engine of torture, the bloody cross. He hangs on nails, and as he hangs, his own weight becomes his affliction. O see how his arms and legs were racked with violent pulls, his hands and feet bored with nails, his whole body torn with stripes, and gored with blood. And now, O my soul, run with all thy might into his arms, held out at their full length to receive thee. O weigh the matter ! Because sin entered by the senses, therefore the head, in which the senses flourish, is crowned with searching thorns. Because the hands and feet are more especially the instruments of sin, therefore his hands and feet are nailed to the cross for satisfaction. Be enlarged, O my thoughts, and consider it, and consider it again.

9. Consider the darkness that spread over all the earth.

Now was the sun ashamed to shew his brightness, considering that the Father of Lights was darkened with such disgrace. The heavens discoloured their beauty, and are in mourning-robés. The lamp of heaven is immantled with a miraculous eclipse. The sun in the firmament will sympathize with the Sun of Righteousness. It will not appear in glory, though it be mid-day, because the Lord of glory is thus disgraced. And now hear the voice that comes from the Son of God, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Christ, in the garden, tasted the bitter cup of God's fierce wrath, but now he drunk the dregs of it. O, but what is the meaning of this; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Surely, 1. This was not a perpetual, but a temporary forsaking. The Godhead was not taken away from the manhood, but the union remained still, even now when the manhood was forsaken. 2. This was not a forsaking on Christ's part, but only on the Father's part; the Father forsook Christ, but Christ went after him. God took away the sense of his love, but the Son of God laid hold upon him, crying, "My God, my God," &c. 3. This forsaking was not in respect of the being, but in respect of the feeling of God's favour; love, and mercy. Certainly God loved him still; but his sense of comfort was now quite gone, so as it never was before. In his agony there was now and then some little flash of comfort to cheer him; but now all the sense and feeling of God's love was gone. Christ now took the place of sinners, and God the Father shut him out, as it were, amongst the sinners; he drew his mercy out of sight, and therefore he cried out in a kind of wonder, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" After this he speaks but a few words more, and gives up the ghost. He dies, that we might live; he is dissolved himself, that we might be united to his Father. O my soul, see him now if thou canst for weeping; his eyes are dim, his cheeks are wan, his face is pale, his head is bowing, his heart is panting, himself is dying. Come, and die

with him by mortification. Look pale, like him, with grief, and sorrow, and trouble for thy sins.

10. Consider the piercing of his side with a spear, whence came out a stream of blood and water. O Fountain of everlasting waters! Methinks I see the blood running out of his side more freshly than those streams which ran out of the garden of Eden, and watered the whole world. Consider the taking of his body down by Joseph, the burying of it by Joseph and Nicodemus. O my spirit, go with me a little! Christ being dead, it is pity but he should have a funeral. According to the letter, let Joseph and Nicodemus bear his corpse; let the blessed virgin go after it sighing and weeping, and at every other place looking up to heaven; let Mary Magdalene follow after with precious ointment, and with her hair hanging, ready, if need were, to wipe his feet again. Now, let every sinner, according to the nature of his sin, draw something from the passion of Christ to the mortifying of his sin; yea, let all turn mourners; let all bow their heads, and be ready to give up the ghost for the name of Christ. O my soul, that thou wouldest thus meditate, and thus imitate, that so thy meditation might be fruitful, and thy imitation real; I mean, that thy life and death might be conformable to the life and death of Jesus Christ.

### *Sectr. III. Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on the work of our salvation in his death. Indeed nothing doth so cool and refresh a parched and thirsty soul as the blood of Jesus; which made the poor woman cry out so earnestly, "I have an husband, and children, and many other comforts, but I would give them all, and all the good that ever I shall see in this world, or in the world to come, to have my poor thirsty soul refreshed with that precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ." But what is there in Christ's blood or death that is so desirable? I answer,

1. There is in it the Person of Christ, he that is God-

man, “The brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” It is he that died ; every drop of his blood was not only the blood of an innocent man, but of one that was God as well as man. “God with his own blood purchased the church.” Now surely every thing of God is desirable.

2. There is in it a worth. Christ, considered under the notion of a sacrifice, is of infinite worth. No wealth in heaven or earth, besides this, could redeem one soul ; and therefore the apostle sets this against all “corruptible things, as silver and gold,” the things so much set by amongst the men of this world ; “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.”

3. There is in it a merit and satisfaction. The Scripture doth not expressly use these words, but it hath the sense and meaning of them ; as in that text, “He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood.” The very words, *redeeming* and *buying*, plainly demonstrate, that a satisfaction was given to God by the death of Jesus ; “He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us.” “Ye are bought with a price.” And what price was that? Why, his own blood ; “Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood ;” that is, by thy death and passion. This was the *λυτρόν*, that ransom which Christ gave ; “The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many ;” or, as the apostle, “He gave himself a ransom for all.” The word is here, *ανίλυτρόν*, which signifies an adequate price, or a counter-price ; as when one doth, or undergoeth something in the room of another ; as when one yields himself a captive for the redeeming of another out of captivity, or gives up his own life for the saving of another man’s life ; so Christ gave himself, *ανίλυτρόν*, a ransom, or counter-price, submitting himself to the like punishment that his redeemed ones should have undergone.

4. There is in it not only a true, but a copious, and full

satisfaction. Christ's death and blood is superabundant to our sins ; "The grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant," 1 Tim. i. 14; *υπερπλεοντες*, it was over-full, redundant, more than enough. Many an humble soul is apt to complain, "O, if I had not been so great a sinner, there might have been hope." This is to undervalue Christ's redemption, this is to think there is more in sin to damn, than in Christ's sufferings to save; whereas all thy sins to Christ are but as a little cloud to the glorious sun ; yea, all the sins of all the men in the world are but to Christ's merits as a drop to the ocean.

5. There is in it remission of sins. So saith Christ, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Remission of sins is attributed to Christ's death as a cause; it is not thy tears or prayers, or rending of heart, that could pay the least farthing, "Without shedding of blood (saith the apostle,) there is no remission." God will have tears and blood also, though not for the same purpose; for all thy tears thou must fly to Christ only as the cause; it is true thou must mourn, and pray, and humble thyself, but it is Christ's blood only that can wash us clean. O remember this! God will not pardon without satisfaction by the blood of Christ. And surely this makes Christ's death so desirable : "O my sins afflict me, (cries many a one;) O I am loathsome in my own eyes, much more in God's; surely God is offended with my dulness, slothfulness, and my thousand imperfections; I am all the day long entangled with sin." But let this contrite spirit look on Christ's death, and therein he may find all sin is pardoned. See here what an argument is put into thy mouth, from these sufferings of Christ; well mayest thou say, "O Lord, I am unworthy, but it is just and right that Christ obtain what he died for; O pardon my sins for his death's sake, and for his precious blood's sake."

6. There is in it reconciliation and peace with God. "In Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace,

who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. When we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son." This certainly should support the drooping soul; it may be thou criest, " My sins have made a breach betwixt God and my soul; I have warred against heaven, and now God wars against me; and O what odds? If the Lord be angry, yea, but a little, what will become of my poor soul? Is stubble able to contend with the consuming fire? How then shall I contend with God?" But come and look on Christ's death, as the means and meritorious cause of reconciliation; and thou canst not but say, " O this death is desirable!" When God the Father looks at a sinner in the bloody glass of Christ, then saith God, " Fury is not in me, I have no more controversy with this soul; seeing Christ hath suffered, it is enough, I have as much as my justice can demand, my frowns are now turned into smiles." Why this is it that makes Christ's death and blood so desirable to the soul; what, shall Jacob so rejoice in seeing Esau's face altered to him? shall he say to Esau, " I have seen thy face, as the face of God?" How much rather may the humble and believing sinner be filled with gladness, when God, through Christ's blood, shall be thus appeased and reconciled to him?

7 There is in it a blessed virtue to open heaven, and to make passage thither for our souls, " liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." It is the blood of Christ that rends the veil, and makes a way into the holy of holies, that is, into the kingdom of heaven. Without this blood, there is no access to God. It is only by the blood of Christ, that heaven is open to our prayers, and that heaven is open to our persons. This blood is that key that unlocks heaven, and lets in the souls of his redeemed ones. " And I looked, (saith John,) and behold a door was open in heaven, and the first voice I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither;" and no sooner was he in spirit,

and entered in, but he heard the new song ; “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.”

Come now, and gather in all these particulars ; there is in Christ’s blood, the person of Christ, the price of souls, a merit and satisfaction, a copious and full satisfaction, remission of sins, reconciliation with God, a passage into glory ; I might add all other privileges, benefits, dignities of the soul, for they all flow from the blood of Jesus, and they are all contained, either expressly or virtually in the blood of Jesus ; and is not all this worth the looking after ? O my soul, where is thy languor, and fainting towards this blessed object ? When David desired strongly God’s law, he expressed his longings, by the breaking and fainting of his soul ; “ My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath to thy judgment at all times ; and my soul fainteth for thy salvation.” O where be these breakings and faintings ? Strength of desire is expressed by the apostle by groaning, which is the language of sickness. O where be these groanings after Christ’s death ? When I call to mind that Christ’s death is my ransom, that Christ’s stripes are my cures, that Christ’s blood is my fountain to wash in, and to be clean ; how should I but pray in this sense, “ His blood be upon us, and on our children ? ” O I am undone, except I have a share in this blood ! It is only this fountain that can quench my thirst ; and now I have seen the fountain opened, how should I but thirst, and cry out with the woman of Samaria, “ O give me this water, that I thirst no more ? ” But alas, I say it, I only say it. O that I could feel it ! O my Jesus, that thou wouldest breed in me ardent desires, vehement longings, unutterable groans, mighty gaspings. When my spirit is in a right frame, I feel some desires after Christ’s blood ; but how short are these desires, how unworthy of the things desired ? Come, Lord, kindle in me hot, burning desires, and then give me the desirable object.

SECR. IV. *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his sufferings and death. By this hope, I intend only that which the apostle calls “full assurance of hope.” It is not every hope that is a well-grounded hope. That we may discern that the grounds of our hope in Christ’s death are not false, I shall lay down these signs :—

1. If Christ’s death be mine, then is that great end of his death accomplished in me ; viz. “By the sacrifice of himself, he hath put away sin,” even my sin ; and, “in him I have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” As on this account he suffered, “to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity ;” so if his death be mine, I may assuredly say, “my sins are pardoned, and mine iniquities are done away.” Come, then, and try by this sign, canst thou assure thyself that thy sins are forgiven thee ; hast thou heard the whisper of God’s Spirit, “Son, or daughter, be of good comfort, thy sins are remitted ?” there is no question, then, but thou art redeemed by his blood, thou hast part in his sufferings.

2. If Christ’s death be mine, then am I made conformable to Christ in his death. The same that was done to Christ in a natural way, is done in the believer in a spiritual way ; that is, as Christ died so the believer dies ; as Christ died for sin, so the believer dies to sin : “In that he died, he died unto sin, likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin.” Observe here the analogy and resemblance betwixt Christ and us, both die unto sin, Christ, by way of expiation, for the sins of others ; we by the way of mortification, and crucifying our own sins. I look upon this sign as the very touch-stone of a Christian.

Two questions I suppose needful to resolve the grounds of our hope concerning our interest in the death of Christ.

1. Whether in truth our sins are mortified? 2. Whether we grow in mortification?

1. For the former; whether in truth our sins are mortified, it is a skill worth our learning, because of the many deceits that are within us. Sin may seem to be mortified when the occasion is removed; or, when it is but removed from one sin unto another; or, when the sap and strength of sin is dead. As the lamp goes out when either the oil is not supplied, or taken away. Now that in this scrutiny we may search to the bottom, and know the truth of our mortification, it will appear by these rules: (1.) True mortification springs from a root of faith. If we can make out that we believe in Christ for life and salvation, and that now we feel in us the decay of sin, we may conclude from the cause, that this decay of sin is true mortification. It is a blessed effect arising from a right cause.

(2.) True mortification is general; not only one sin, but all sins are mortified in a true believer. As death is unto the members of the body, so is mortification unto the members of sin; now death seizeth upon every member, it leaves not life in any one member of the body; so neither doth mortification leave life in any one member of sin. It is good to observe the degrees of mortification; the first is, to forbear the practice of gross sins, in word or deed. The second is, to deny consent and will to all frailties and infirmities. The third is, to be free from any liking of any evil motion; not only to deny consent, but also to deny the very thought or imagination. If when these motions first arise we presently quench, reject, detest, and cast them away from us; therein is true mortification.

2. Whether we grow in our mortification? True mortification is that which grows. Now the growth of our mortification will appear by these following signs:—  
(1.) Growing mortification hath its chief conflicts in spiritual lusts. At first we mortify grosser evils; but

when we grow in this blessed duty, we then set ourselves against spiritual wickedness; as pride, presumption, self-confidence. This method the apostle sets down; “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.” First, from all filthiness of the flesh or body, and then from all filthiness of the spirit. (2.) Growing mortification is constant, lasting, durable. When there is in the heart a sudden flowing and reflowing, it comes from those vast seas of corruption that are within us. In this case, mortification is very weak. But, on the contrary, if we find our standing more firm and sure; if for the main we walk evenly, and keep closely to the Lord; it carries with it an evidence that our mortification grows. (3.) Growing mortification feels lust more weak, and the spirit more strong in its ordinary actings. Suppose it be a lust or fancy, it cannot boil up to gross fancies as it was wont; or, suppose it be pride, it boils not up to such a spirit of pride as formerly; instead of bringing forth fruit, it now brings forth blossoms; or, instead of bringing forth blossoms, it now brings forth nothing but leaves; this is a sign that this lust is withering more and more; and, as when the water abates, it overflows less ground, we may thus conclude that mortification grows. (4.) Growing mortification hath more ability to abstain from the very occasions and beginnings of lust. When a man cannot endure to come where such a one is that he loves not, when he cannot endure the sight of him, or any thing that puts him in mind of him, not so much as to parley, or speak with him; this is a sign of strong hatred; and so when a man hates the very garment spotted with the flesh, here is a good sign.

O my soul, try now the growth of thy mortification by these signs; hast thou overcome grosser sins, and is now thy chief conflict with spiritual wickednesses? Is thy standing and walking with God more close, and even, and constant than sometimes it hath been? Is thy lust more weak, and thy grace more strong in ordinary actings? Hast thou now more ability to quench the flame

of sin in the very spark, to abstain from sin in its first motion? Why, then is the promise accomplished, "He will subdue our iniquities :" Surely thou art a growing Christian ; thou hast fellowship with Christ in his sufferings ; thy ground is solid, firm, and stable ; thy hope hath foundation, and thou mayest build upon it, that Christ's death and sufferings are thine, even thine.

#### SECT. V. *Of believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation, during his sufferings and death. Every one looks upon this as an easy duty ; only the humble soul cries out, "O what an hard thing it is, considering my enmity against Christ, to believe that Christ died for me, that he gave himself to the death, even to the death of the cross, for my soul ?" Trembling soul ! throw not away thyself by unbelief. It may be thou wouldest not die for an enemy, an irreconcilable enemy ; but are not the mercies of God above all the mercies of men ? Look on Jesus as lifted up, and then look at the end and meaning ; why was Jesus thus lifted up ?

1. One design of Christ's death was to redeem us from the slavery of death and hell. We were "carnal, sold under sin ;" whereupon the law seized on us, locked us up, as it were, in a dungeon ; yea, the sentence passed, and we but waited for execution. Now to get us rid from this dismal, damnable estate, Christ himself is made under the law, that he might redeem us ; not by way of entreaty ; that would not serve the turn. Sold we were, and bought we must be, it was a matter of redemption : but with what must we be redeemed ? "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." His precious blood was the price we stood him in ; which he paid when "he gave his life a ransom for many." The case stood thus betwixt Christ and us in this point of redemption ; we all, like a company of malefactors, were ready to be

executed. Now, what said Christ to this? "I will suffer that which they should suffer; I will take upon me their execution, upon condition I may redeem them." Now this he did at his death, and this was the end why he died, that by his death we might be redeemed from death and hell.

2. Another design of Christ's death was to mortify our members which are upon the earth. Not only would he remit sin, but he would destroy it, kill it, crucify it; he would not have it "reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof." This design the apostle sets out in these words, "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness." Christ, by his death, had not only a design to deliver us from the guilt of sin, but also from the power of sin. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Paul was a mortified man, dead to the world, and dead to sin. But how came he so to be? Why this he attributes to the cross, the death of Christ. The death of Jesus was the cause of this death in Paul; "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God?" There is in the death of Christ, first, a value, and secondly, a virtue; the former is available to our justification, the latter to our sanctification. Now sanctification hath two parts, mortification and vivification: Christ's death, or passive obedience, is more properly conducive to the one; his life, or active obedience, to the other.

O my soul, look to this: herein lies the pith and marrow of the death of Christ; and now, if thou wilt but exercise thy faith in this respect, how mightest thou draw the virtue of his death into thy soul? But here is a question, how should I manage my faith, to draw down the virtue of Christ's death, and so to feel the virtue of Christ's death in my soul, mortifying, crucifying, and killing sin? I answer, (1.) In prayer, meditation, self-

examination, and receiving of the Lord's supper. I must propound to myself the Lord Jesus Christ, as having undertaken and performed that painful work of suffering even unto death, yea, that of the cross. (2.) I must look upon those grievous, painful, shameful sufferings of Christ as very strange and wonderful ; but especially the spiritual part of his sufferings, viz. the sense and apprehension of God's forsaking and afflicting him in the day of his fierce anger. How should I but stand aghast at these so wonderful sufferings of Jesus Christ ! (3.) I must weigh and consider what it was that caused all this, viz. sin, yea, my sin, yea, this and that sin particularly. This comes nearer home, and from this I must now gather these several conclusions.

1. It was the design of Christ, by his sufferings, to give satisfaction to the infinite justice of God for sin. 2. It was intended to give the world a most eminent demonstration of the odiousness and execrableness of sin. 3. It holds forth, as sin is horrid in itself, so it cannot but be exceeding grievous and offensive to Christ ; it put him to all this pain. How then should it but offend him above any thing in the world ? 4. If therefore there be in me any spark of love towards Christ, or any likeness to Christ, or if I would have Christ bear any love unto me, it will absolutely behove me by all means to loathe sin, and cast it away from me ; to root it up, to quit my hands, and to rid my heart of it. The truth is, I cannot possibly give forth a more pregnant proof of my sincere love to Christ, than by offering all violence, all holy severity against sin for his sake. Now when the heart is thus exercised, God, by his Spirit will not fail to meet us ; our desire and endeavour to weaken and kill sin in the soul is not without its reward ; but especially when sin hath in this way, and by this means, lost the affection of the soul, and is brought into hatred and disesteem, it decays and dies of itself. So matters going thus and thus in the heart, the influence that should nourish sin is cut off, and it withers by degrees till it be finally destroyed.

SECT. VI. *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. What! did he suffer and die? “Greater love than this hath no man, that a man should give his life for his friends.—But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Here is an argument of love indeed; how should we but love him who thus loved us? In prosecution of this, I have no more to do, but first to shew Christ’s love to us, and to exhort to an exercise of our love to him again.

1. For his love to us: It is worth our while to consider it in an holy meditation. Indeed with what less than ravishment of spirit can I behold the Lord Jesus, who from everlasting was clothed with glory and majesty, now exposed to hunger, thirst, weariness, danger, contempt, poverty, revilings, scourgings, persecution? But let them pass. Into what ecstacies may I be cast, to see the Judge of all the world accused, judged, condemned? To see the Lord of life dying upon the tree of shame and curse? To see the eternal Son of God struggling with his Father’s wrath? To see him who had said, “I and my Father are one,” sweating drops of blood in his agony, and crying, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” O whither hath his love to mankind carried him? Had he only sent his creatures to serve us, had he only sent his love to direct and advise us in the way to heaven; had he only sent his angels from his chamber of presence to attend us, and to minister to us, it had been a great deal of mercy; or if it must be so, had Christ come down from heaven himself only to visit us, or had he come only and wept over us, saying, “O that you had known, even you in this your day, the things belonging to your peace! O that you had more considered my goodness! O that you had never sinned!” This would have been such a mercy as that all the world would have wondered at it. But that Christ himself should come, and lay down his

life for his people ; and yet I am not at the lowest, that he should not only part with life, but part with the sense and sweetness of God's love, which is a thousand times better than life ; that he should be content to be accursed, that we might be blessed ; that he should be content to be forsaken, that we might not be forsaken ; that he should be content to be condemned, that we might be acquitted ; O what raptures of spirit can be sufficient for the admiration of this infinite mercy ! Be thou swallowed up, O my soul, in this depth of Divine love ; and hate to spend thy thoughts any more upon the base objects of this world.

Look upon him ! He hangs on the cross all naked, torn, and bloody, betwixt heaven and earth ; he hath a crown indeed, but such a one as few men will touch, none will take from him : his hair is all clotted with blood, his face all clouded with black and blue ; he is all over pitifully rent, outwards, inwards, body, and soul. I will think the rest : alas ! had I the tongues of men and angels, I could not express it. O love more deep than hell ! O love more high than heaven ! The brightest seraphims that burn in love, are but as sparkles to that mighty flame of love in the heart of Jesus.

2. If this be Christ's love to us, what is that love we owe to Christ ? O now for an heart that might be some ways answerable to these mercies ! O for a soul sick of love, yea, sick unto death ! This only sickness is our health, this death our life ; and not to be thus sick, is to be dead in sins and trespasses. Why, surely I have heard enough for which to love Christ for ever. The depths of God's grace are bottomless, they pass our understanding, yet they recreate our hearts ; they give matter of admiration, yet they are not devoid of consolation. O God, raise up our souls to thee ; and if our spirits be too weak to know thee, make our affections ardent and sincere to love thee.

The whole gospel is no other thing than a motive to draw man to God by the force of God's love to man. In this sense the holy Scriptures may be called *The Book of*

*true Love*, seeing therein God both unfolds his love to us, and also binds our love to him ; but of all the motives we may draw from Christ, and of all the arguments we may find in the gospel of Christ, there is none comparable to this, the death of Christ, the blood of Jesus. Is not this such a love-letter as never was the like ? Read the words, “ For his great love wherewith he loved us,” Eph. ii. 4. O consider it, is not this a great love ? Are not all mercies wrapt up in the blood of Christ ? It may be thou hast riches, honours, friends, means, O but thank the blood of Christ for all thou hast. It may be thou hast grace, and that is better than corn, or wine, or oil. For this thank the blood of Jesus ; surely it was the blood of Christ that procured this for thee ; thou wast a rebellious soul, thou hast an hard and filthy heart, but Christ’s blood was the fountain opened, and it took away all sin and all uncleanness. Christ is in all, and Christ is above all, and wilt thou not love him ? O that all our words were words of love ; and all our labour, labour of love ; and all our thoughts, thoughts of love ; that we might speak of love, and muse on love, and love this Christ, who hath first loved us, with all our heart, and soul, and might !

#### SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of salvation, in his sufferings and death. What ! hath Christ suffered for us ? Hath he drunk off all the cup of God’s wrath, and left none for us ? How should we be but cheered ? Precious souls, why are you afraid ? There is no death, no hell, “ no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” There is no Divine justice for them to undergo, that have their share in this death of Christ. O the grace and mercy that is purchased by this means of Christ ! O the waters of comfort that flow from the sufferings and obedience of Christ ! Christ was amazed, that we might be cheered ; Christ was imprisoned, that

we might be delivered ; Christ was accused, that we might be acquitted ; Christ was condemned, that we might be redeemed ; Christ suffered his Father's wrath, that the victory might be ours, and that in the end we might see him face to face in glory. Is not here matter of joy ? It may be, sin, and justice, and conscience, and death, and hell, appear as enemies, but is there not enough in the blood of Christ to chase them away ? Give me leave but to frame the objections of some doubting souls, and see whether Christ's death will not sufficiently answer them all.

1. One cries thus, “ O ! I know not what will become of me, my sins are ever before me : ‘ Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.’ I have sinned against a most dear, and gracious, and merciful God and Father in our Lord Jesus. O the aggravations of my sins ! Are they not sins above measure sinful ? ” It may be so, but the blood of Christ is “ a fountain opened for sins and uncleanness.”—“ And now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” As the scape-goat under the law had upon his head all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and so was “ sent away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness ; ” so the Lord Jesus, (of whom that goat was a type) had all our iniquities laid upon him by God his Father, and bearing them, he took them away ; “ Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.” He went away with them into the wilderness, or into the land of forgetfulness. See what comfort is here !

2. Another cries thus, “ O ! I know not what will become of me, I have transgressed the law, and it speaks terribly ; ‘ Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.’ ” Say not so, for by the death of Christ, though the law be broken, yet the curse is removed. The apostle is clear, “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the

law, being made a curse for us." He was made a curse for us ; that is, the fruits and effects of God's curse, the punishment due to sinners, the penal curse which justice required, was laid upon Christ, and by this means we are freed from the curse of the law. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus :" the law is satisfied, and the bond is cancelled. O what comfort is this !

3. Another cries thus, "O ! I know not what will become of me, I have offended justice ; and what, shall I appeal from the seat of justice to the throne of grace ? My sins are gone before, and they are knocking at heaven-gates, and crying, Justice, Lord, on this sinner." By this death of Christ, free grace and justice are both thy friends. Thou needest not appeal from the court of justice to the mercy-seat. In this mystery of godliness there may be as much comfort in standing before the bar of justice, as at the mercy-seat. And yet I speak not against relying on God's mercy for pardon. But what need we appeal from justice to mercy, when by faith we may tender the death of Christ, and so find acceptance with the justice of God itself ? Come, and let me tell thee, if thou hast any share in the death of Christ, thou hast two tenures to hold thy pardon by, mercy and justice, free grace and righteousness ; mercy in respect of thee, and justice in respect of Christ. Not only is free grace ready to acquit thee, but a full price is laid down to discharge thee of all thy sins : so that now when the prince of this world comes against thee, thou mayest say, "How can he accuse me, seeing Christ is my surety ; seeing the bond hath been sued, and Christ Jesus would not leave one farthing unpaid ?"

4. Another cries thus, "O ! I know not what will become of me ; I see death standing before me : O this is he that is the king of fears, the inlet to all those plagues in another world, and die I must, there is no remedy : O ! I startle, and am afraid of it." And why so ? It is

Christ that died, and by his death took away the sting of death. Come, meditate upon the death of Christ, and thou shalt find matter enough in his death, for the subduing of thy fears of death, both in the merit of it, in the effect of it, and in the end of it. 1. In the merit of it ; Christ's death is meritorious, and in that respect, the writ of mortality is to the saints only a writ of ease, a passage into glory. 2. In the effect of it, Christ's death is the conquest of death ; Christ went down into the grave, that the grave, which was before a prison, might now be a thoroughfare, so that all his saints may with ease pass through, and sing, " O death where is thy sting ?" 3. In the end of it, Christ's death, amongst other ends, aims " at the ruin of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and to deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time in bondage." Christ pursued this end in dying, to deliver thee from the fear of death ; and if now thou fearest, thy fearing is a kind of making Christ's death of none effect. O come, and " with joy draw water out of this well of salvation !"

Come, then, and comfort yourselves, all believers, in this death of Christ ; do you believe ? Why then do you sit drooping ? " What manner of communications are these that you have, as you walk, and are sad ?" Away, disquietness of spirit ; Christ is dead, that you might live ; in this respect every thing speaks comfort ; God and men, heaven and earth, angels and devils ; the very justice of God is now your friend, and bids you go away comforted, for it is satisfied to the full ; heaven itself waits on you, and keeps the doors open that your souls may enter. O my soul, I see thou art poring on sin, on thy crimson sins, but I would have thee dwell on that crimson blood of Christ ; it is " the blood of sprinkling, it speaks better things than the blood of Abel ;" it cries for mercy, and pardon, and refreshment, and salvation ; thy sins cry, " Lord do justice against such a soul ;" but the blood of Christ hath another cry, " I am abased, I have answered all." Methinks this should make thy heart

leap for joy ; it is the spiritual wine that makes merry the heart of man ; and it is the voice of Christ to all his guests, “ Eat, O friends ; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.”

SECT. VIII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, or on God the Father, in and through Jesus. 1. We must pray that all these transactions of Christ in his sufferings and death may be ours ; if we direct our prayers immediately to Jesus Christ, let us tell him what pains he hath suffered for our sakes ; and let us complain against ourselves, “ O what shall we do, who by our sins have so tormented our dearest Lord ? What contrition can be great enough, what tears sufficient, what hatred and detestation equal to those sad and heavy sufferings of our Jesus ? ” And then let us pray, that he would pity us, and forgive us those sins wherewith we crucified him ; that he would bestow on us the virtue of his death, that his wounds might heal us, his death might quicken us, and his blood might cleanse us from all our filth of sin ; and lastly, that he would assure us that his death is ours ; that he would persuade us, “ That neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

2. We must praise the Lord for all these sufferings of Christ. Hath he indeed suffered all these punishments for us ? Then what shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits ? What shall we do for him, who hath done and suffered all these things ? But especially, if we believe our part in the death of Christ ; in all the virtues, benefits, victories, purchases, and privileges of his precious death, then what manifold cause of thankfulness and praise is here ? Be enlarged, O my soul, sound forth the praises of thy Christ, tell all the world of that love of Christ,

which flowed with his blood out of all his wounds into thy spirit ; tune thy heart-strings aright, and keep consort with all the angels of heaven, and all his saints on earth ; sing that psalm of John the Divine, “ Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.”

#### SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in respect of his sufferings and death : looking unto Jesus is effective of this. Come then, and let us look on Christ, and conform to Christ in this respect. In this particular, I shall examine these queries ; 1. Wherein must we conform ? 2. What is the cause of this conformity ? 3. What are the means of this conformity ?

For the first, wherein must we conform ? I answer, In his graces, sufferings, and death. 1. In the graces that most eminently shone in his bitter passion ; his life indeed was a gracious life, but his graces shone most clearly at his death ; I shall instance in some of them. (1.) His humility ; that the most high Son of God should vouchsafe to be contemned, and be less esteemed than Barabbas, a murderer ; that Christ should be crucified betwixt two thieves, as if he had been the ring-leader of all malefactors ; O what humility was this ? (2.) His patience ; “ Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.—Who when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.” O the patience of Christ ! (3.) His love ; “ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” This love is an exemplar of all love, it is the fire that should kindle all our sparks ; “ Be ye followers of God, (saith the apostle,) as dear children ; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given him-

self for us, an offering and sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour.” Some observe, that in the temple there were two altars, the brazen, and the golden ; the brazen altar was for bloody sacrifices, the golden altar for the offering of incense ; now the former was a type of Christ’s bloody offering upon the cross, the latter of Christ’s intercession for us in his glory ; in regard of both, the apostle tells us, that Christ gave himself, both for an “ offering and sacrifice of sweet smelling-savour unto God.” O what love was this !

(4.) His meekness ; in all his passion he shewed not the least anger ; he suffered himself to be carried like a sheep to the butchery, and “ as a lamb before the shearer is dumb, so opened he not his mouth : he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter ; ” a lamb goes as quietly to the shambles, as if it were going to the fold ; and so went Christ to his cross. O the meekness of Christ ! (5.) His obedience ; “ He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.—He sought not his own will, but the will of him that sent him.” There was a command that the Father laid on Christ from all eternity : “ O my Son, my only-begotten Son, thou must go down, and leave heaven, and empty thyself, and die the death, even the death of the cross : ” all which the Lord Jesus did in time ; he was obedient to death, even to the death of the cross. Now in all these graces we must conform to Christ. “ Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly.”—And, “ walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us : ” it is as if Christ had said, mark the steps where I have trod, and follow me in humility, in patience, in love, in meekness, in obedience unto death.

2. We must conform to Christ in his sufferings, if he calls us to them ; this was the apostle’s prayer, “ That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings ; ” it was his desire, that he might experimentally know what exceeding joy and comfort it was to suffer for Christ, and with Christ. Concerning this, the other apostle speaks also, “ Christ

suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps." But the text that seems so pertinent, and yet so difficult, is that of Paul, " I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church." One would wonder how Paul should fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ ; were Christ's sufferings imperfect ? and must Paul add to them ? no surely ; " for by one offering, Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." I suppose this is the genuine meaning of the Spirit. " Now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, whereby I fulfil the measure assigned me of these tribulations, which remain yet to be endured of Christ in his mystical body, which I do for the body's sake, not to satisfy for it, but to confirm it, to strengthen it by my example in the gospel of Christ." The sufferings of Christ are either personal or general ; his personal sufferings were those he endured in his own body, as Mediator ; which once for ever he finished. His general sufferings are those which he endures in his mystical body, the church ; as he is a member with the rest ; and these are the sufferings Paul speaks of, and which Paul with others filled up.

But wherein is the conformity betwixt our sufferings, and the sufferings of Christ ? I answer : (1.) Our sufferings have no conformity with Christ's in these two things. 1. In the office of Christ's sufferings ; for his were meritorious and satisfactory, ours only for edification. 2. Nor in the weight and measure of Christ's sufferings ; for his were such as would have pressed any mere creature as low as hell. But, (2.) Our sufferings must have conformity with Christ, 1. In the cause of them ; Christ's sufferings were instrumentally from satan and wicked men ; we must look to suffer by the enemies of Christ, if we have any share in Christ. 2. In the manner of undergoing them ; we must suffer with a proportion of that humility, and patience, and love, and meekness, and obedience, which Christ shewed in his

sufferings. 3. In respect of the issue of them ; we must look upon Christ's issue, and expect it to be ours : "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so entered into glory ?"—And, " If so be that we suffer with Christ, we shall be glorified together with Christ."—" If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

By reason of this conformity, we have communion with Christ in all these particulars ; as, 1. We have Christ's strength to bear sufferings. 2. His victories to overcome sufferings. 3. His intercession to preserve us from falling away in sufferings. 4. His compassion to proportion our sufferings to the measure of strength which he hath given us. 5. His Spirit to draw in the same yoke with us, and to hold us under all sufferings, that we sink not. 6. His graces to be more glorious by our sufferings, as a torch when it is shaken, shines the brighter. 7. His crown to reward our sufferings, when we shall have tasted our measure of them. O my soul, study this conformity, and be content with thy portion ; yea, comfort thyself in this condition of sufferings ; must we not drink of our Saviour's cup ? Never wonder that thou art hated, or persecuted of men. Why, I tell thee, if Christ himself were now amongst us in the form of a servant, in that very condition that sometimes he was, and should convince men of their wickedness, as searchingly as sometimes he did, I verily think he would be the most hated man in all the world.

3. We must conform to Christ in his death, carrying in us a resemblance and representation of his death. But what death is this ? I answer, in a word, " A death unto sin." So the apostle ; " In that he died, he died unto sin :—likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." There is a likeness betwixt Christ's death and our death, in this respect ; " we are planted together in the likeness of his death." True mortification carries a resemblance of the death of Christ. As, for instance ; Christ's death was a voluntary death. " I lay down my life, that I may take it again ; no man taketh it from me,

but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Not all the men on earth, nor all the devils in hell, could have effected Christ's death, if he had not pleased: his death was a spontaneous act; so is our mortification. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power:" many may leave their sins against their wills; but this is not true mortification; it bears not in it the likeness of Christ's death, for he died willingly. Christ's death was a violent death; he died not naturally, but violently; "He was put to death in the flesh; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter." So is our mortification; it is voluntary in respect of us, but violent in respect of sin: when a man lays violent hands on his sins; when he cuts them off, being yet in their strength; when he pulls up those weeds before they wither in themselves, this is true mortification.

Secondly: As to the cause of this conformity; it was the death of Christ; which is, (1.) The meritorious cause. Christ's death was of so great a price, that it deserved at God's hands our conformity to Christ; "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that by his death he might sanctify it, and cleanse it; and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (2.) An exemplary cause; "He suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps." He died for us, leaving us an example, that we should die to sin, as he died for sin. (3.) An efficient cause; it works this conformity by a secret virtue issuing from it. Thus Christians are said to be "engrafted with Christ in the likeness of his death." (4.) An impelling, or a moving cause, as all objects are: for objects have an attractive power. Christ crucified doth heal sin, beget grace, encourage to sufferings, by being looked upon with the eyes of faith; "Look unto Jesus," and the very sight of him will draw you after him. Christ crucified hath an attractive power. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me."

Thirdly: what are the means of this conformity? I answer: 1. Go to the cross of Jesus Christ. It is not all our resolutions, promises, vows, endeavours, without this, that will effect our conformity to Christ in his death; no, this conformity is a fruit of the death of Christ, and therefore whosoever would have this work wrought in him, let him first have recourse to Christ's cross.

2. Look up to him that hangs upon it, contemplate the death of Jesus Christ; consider seriously his bitter, shameful, painful sufferings. Much hath been said, only here draw it into some epitome: As, 1. Consider who he was. 2. What he suffered. 3. Why he suffered. 4. For whom he suffered. 5. For what end he suffered. 6. With what mind he suffered. Every one of these will make some discoveries either of his graces or of his gracious actings in our behalf; and who can tell how far this very *look* may work on us to change us, and transform us into the image of Jesus Christ?

3. Let us humbly bewail our defect and inconformity, either to the graces, sufferings, or death of Christ. As thus; "Lo, here the profound humility, wonderful patience, fervent love, admirable meekness, constant obedience of Jesus Christ! These are the particulars to which I shall conform. But O alas! what a wide distance is there betwixt me and them? Christ in his sufferings shined with graces; his graces appeared in his sufferings like so many stars in a bright winter's night; but how dim are the graces in my soul! His sorrows and sufferings were so great, that some think it dangerous to define them; but how poor, how little are my sufferings for Jesus Christ? I have not yet resisted unto blood; and if I had, what were this in comparison of his sufferings? Christ in his sufferings died; his passive obedience was unto death, even to the death of the cross. He hung on the cross till he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. He died unto sin once; but alas! how do I live in that for which he died? To this day my sin hath not given

up the ghost ; to this day the death of Christ is not the death of my sin ; my sin is not yet crucified : O how unanswerable am I to Christ in all these respects ?”

4. Let us quicken, provoke, and rouse up our souls to this conformity ; let us set before them exciting arguments ; *ex. gr.* The greatest glory that a Christian can attain to in this world, is to have a resemblance to Jesus Christ. Again, the more like we are to Christ, the better he is pleased with us. Again, a likeness to Christ in his death, will cause a likeness to Christ in his glory ; “ If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” Then let us quicken and provoke our souls to this conformity.

5. Let us pray to God, that he will make us conformable to Jesus Christ. Is it grace we want ? Let us beg of him, that of that fulness that is in Christ, we may in our measure receive grace for grace. Is it patience, or joy in sufferings that we want ? Let us beg of him, that as he had promised, he will send us the Comforter, that we may follow Christ cheerfully, from his cross to his crown, from earth to heaven. Is it mortification our souls pant after ? This indeed makes us most like to Christ in his sufferings and death ; why, then, pray we for this mortification.

6. Let us frequently return to our “ looking unto Jesus Christ,” to our believing in Christ, as he was lifted up. There is something flowing into the soul, while it is acting faith on the death of Christ, which, for the rise, or the manner of its working, is beyond what tongue can speak, or pen can write, or pencil can delineate. Come, then, if we would have grace, endure afflictions, die to sin, grow in mortification : let us again and again return to our duty of looking unto Jesus, or believing in Jesus, as he was lifted up.

# LOOKING UNTO JESUS, IN HIS RESURRECTION.

---

## THE SIXTH BOOK.

---

### CHAP. I.

#### SECT. I. *Of the Time and Reasons of Christ's Resurrection.*

THE sun, that went down in a ruddy cloud, is risen again with glorious beams. In this piece, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object, and then give directions how to look upon it. The object is Jesus, carrying on the great work of man's salvation in his resurrection, and during the time of his abode on earth after his resurrection. Now in the transactions of this time, I shall only take notice of these two things; his resurrection, and his appearance. The Scripture tells us that he arose again the third day. On this point I shall shew, 1. Why he arose. 2. How he arose. For the former, we have these reasons.

1. That he might powerfully convince or confound his adversaries, notwithstanding their care, their watch, their seal, their making all as sure as possibly they could. For at the very time he foretold, he broke the bars of death, and made the gates of brass to fly asunder.

2. That he might confirm the faith of all his followers. “If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain,” saith the apostle. Christ’s resurrection both confirms our faith, as to his person and his office. For his person; this speaks him to be the “Eternal Son of God;” and for his office; this speaks him to be the promised Messiah, the King and Saviour of his church.

3. That it might appear he had fully satisfied the justice of God for sin. So it was, that God laid the forfeiture of the bond on Christ; he arrested him, brought him to the prison of the grave; and there he was till the debt was paid to the uttermost farthing; and then, that it might clearly appear the bond was cancelled, he arose again from the dead.

4. That he might conquer sin, death, and the devil: and hence the apostle cries *Victory*, upon the occasion of Christ’s resurrection; “O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” Now was the time when he spoiled principalities and powers, that he trod on the serpent’s head, that he came upon him, took from him his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils.

5. That he might “become the first-fruits of them that slept.” Christ is called the first-fruits in a double respect. (1.) In respect of the day whereon he arose; Paul was an excellent critic: the very feast carried him to the word; as the day of his passion was the day of the passover, and the apostle thence could say, “Christ is our Passover,” 1 Cor. xv. 7; so the day of Christ’s rising was the day of the first-fruits, and the apostle thence could say, “Christ is our first-fruits.” Concerning this feast of the first-fruits, we read, Lev. xxiii. 10, 11. It was their first harvest of their basest grain, barley; the full harvest of their best grain of wheat was not till Pentecost. Now upon this day, the morrow after the Sabbath, the beginning of their first harvest, when the sheaf of their first-fruits was brought unto the priest, and waved before the Lord, Christ arose from the dead, and in this respect Paul calls him the “first-fruits of them that sleep,” of all the saints.

He arose on this day, for the full harvest is not till the general resurrection-day. (2.) He is called the first-fruit in respect of them whom he thereby sanctified: for as an handful of the first-fruits sanctified the whole field of corn that was growing, so Jesus Christ, the first-fruits of the dead, sanctifies all those who are lying in the grave to rise again by his power, even when they are in the dust of death. “If Christ be not risen,” (saith the apostle,) “ye are yet in your sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.”

6. That being formerly abased as a servant, and crucified as a sinner, he might thus be declared to be the Son of God, and exalted to be a Prince and Saviour; and so his name might be glorified of all the world. It was of necessary consequence that he that was so humbled, must be thus exalted; “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.” Of all the reasons of Christ’s resurrection, we must look upon this as the main; for, as he hath made all things for his own glory, “so Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father;” by the glory, or to the glory, or for the glory, of himself and of his Father.

## SECT. II. *Of the Manner of Christ’s Resurrection.*

How he rose; the manner of his resurrection we may consider in these particulars: 1. That Christ rose again as a common person, who stood in our stead. Adam, we know, was reckoned before his fall as a common person, not standing singly for himself, but as representing all mankind to come of him; so Jesus Christ is reckoned to us, both before his death, and in his death, and after his death, as a common person; not living, dying, or rising again, singly for himself, but as representing all the believers in the world. As among all the sheaves in the field, there was some one sheaf that, in the name of all the rest, was lifted up and waved before the Lord; so

when all were dead, Christ, as the first-fruits, rose again from the dead. Let this ever be remembered, that Christ rose again as the first-fruits as an head, as a common person.

2. That Christ rose again by his own power; this he meant when he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." He saith not, Destroy you, and some other shall raise it up; no, but I, even I myself, will do it; yea, and by my own power. Here is a plain proof of the Divine nature of Christ, for none ever did, ever could do that but God himself. It is true also that the Father raised him, and yet this contradicts not the declaration that he raised up himself; for "whatsoever the Father doth, I do," saith Christ. Christ's resurrection is the indivisible work of the blessed Trinity; it is a work common to all the three Persons; there is but one power of the Father and of the Son; so that of both it is true, the Father raised him, and the Son raised himself.

3. That Christ rose again with an earthquake: "And behold there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven." The earth shook at his death, and now it trembles at his resurrection; plainly speaking that it could neither endure his suffering, nor hinder his rising.

4. That in his resurrection, angels ministered to him. "An angel came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Christ's power was not only exerted in the grave, but extended to heaven and to the hosts therein. However the chief priests and pharisees conspired together to confine him in the earth; sealing the stone, and setting a watch; yet the angels of heaven were ready to wait on him as their Sovereign Lord. An angel descending to roll away the stone; not that Christ was unable to do it himself; he shook the earth, and could not he lift a stone? O yes! but thus he would manifest his power, by declaring his authority over the

mighty angels : He need but to say to the angel, Do this, and he doth it.

5. That Christ rose again, accompanied with others : "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept, arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." It may be the graves were opened when Christ was laid down in his grave ; yet the spirits came not into the dead bodies till Christ's resurrection ; the text is plain that they came not out of their graves till Christ was raised. Christ "is the beginning," (saith the apostle,) "the first-born from the dead," both in time and efficacy. 1. In time, he rose to eternal life the first of all men. 2. In respect of efficacy, Christ rose first, that by his power all the rest might rise. It is a question what became of those bodies which now rose : some think they died again ; but it is more probable that, seeing they rose to manifest the quickening virtue of Christ's resurrection, they were also glorified with Christ ; and as they rose with Christ's rising, so they ascended up into heaven with Christ's ascending.

6. That Christ rose again with a true, perfect, incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, agile, and glorious body. (1.) He had a true body, consisting of flesh, and blood, and bone ; so he told his disciples, when they supposed him a spirit ; "Handle me, and see," (said he,) "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." I know this body, after his resurrection, was comparatively a spiritual body ; yet for all that, he never laid aside the essential properties of a true body. (2.) He had a perfect body ; however he was cut and mangled before his death, yet after his resurrection, all was perfect. (3.) He had an incorruptible, immortal body. The apostle is express ; "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more ; death hath no more dominion over him." Consonant hereunto is that of Christ ; "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen." (4.) He had a powerful body. Luther could say of the glorified

saints, that they had a power so great as to toss the greatest mountains in the world like a ball : and Anselm hath an expression not much unlike, “They have such a power, as they are able to shake the whole earth at their pleasure.” How much more could Christ cause that great earthquake at the rising of his body ? (5.) He had a spiritual body ; it needed not meat, drink or refreshment, as it did before. It is true, that the disciples “gave him a piece of a broiled fish and of a honey-comb, and he took it, and did eat before them ;” but this he did only to confirm their faith ; he eat out of power, and not out of necessity.

(6.) He had an agile body ; it was in his pleasure to move as well upwards as downwards, as it may appear by the ascension of his body into heaven ; which was not caused by any effort, or violent motion, but was a property agreeing to all bodies glorified. Augustine hath an expression concerning the glorified saints, “That they can move to any place they will, and as soon as they will ;” they can move up and down like thought ; how much more may it be said of the body of Christ ?

(7.) He had a glorious body ; this appeared in his transfiguration, “when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as light ;” but especially after his resurrection and ascension, when “his head and his hair were white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.” It is true, that from his resurrection until his ascension, his body appeared not thus glorious unto them that saw it. But whether his glory was delayed, during his forty days’ abode upon earth ; or whether he so far condescended, for his disciples’ sake, as to keep in his glory, that it might not dazzle them, is hard to determine. I am apt to think, that he might draw in the beams of his glory, and yet that he was not entered into that fulness of glory as after his ascension ; and so some expound those words of Christ to Mary, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father ;” *q.d.* Fix not thy thoughts

so much upon my present condition, for I have not yet attained the highest pitch of my exaltation, nor shall I until I ascend unto my Father.

From this resurrection of Christ, how are we informed that Christ is the Son of God? Thus Paul speaks, He was “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” And how are we informed that Christ is Lord over all things? “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.” And how are we informed that Christ rose again for us? “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.” And how are we informed that by his resurrection we are justified? “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” And by his resurrection at the last day we shall be raised; for “the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies.” And by his resurrection finally we shall be saved; for after we are raised, “we shall not die any more, but be equal unto the angels, and be the children of God; being the children of the resurrection.”

### SECT. III. *Of the arguments of Christ's Resurrection.*

Christ, after his passion, shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. And so he had need to persuade men to the faith of so strange a truth. If we consult primitive times, or later times, never was matter attended with more scruple, and slowness of belief, with more doubts and difficulties than was this truth of Christ's resurrection. Mary Magdalen saw it first, and reported it. “But they believed her not,” Mark xvi. 10. The two disciples who went to Emmaus, saw it also, and reported it, but “they believed them not,” Luke xxiv. 37. Divers women together saw him, and came and told the disciples, but “their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they

believed them not ;" Luke xxiv. 11. They all saw him, and even seeing him, " yet they believed not for joy, but wondered," Luke xxiv. 41. When the wonder was over, and the rest told it but to one that happened to be absent, you know how peremptory he was ; that " except he saw in his hands the print of his nails, and put his fingers into the print of the nails, and thrust his hands into his side, he would not believe, John xx. 25. In after-times the whole world stopped their ears at this report of the resurrection of Christ. It was with the Grecians at Athens a very scorn ; " When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked," Acts xvii. 22. It was with Festus, the great Roman, *μανία*, a plain frenzy ; " Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself, much learning doth make thec mad," Acts xxvi. 24. But come we to our own times, the resurrection of Christ is to this day as much opposed by Jews and Atheists, as any one article of our creed. And surely we had need to look to it ; for " if Christ be not risen, (as the apostle argues,) then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain," 1 Cor. xv. 14. If Christ be not risen, " ye are yet in your sins ; and they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," 1 Cor. xv. 17, 18. Of all the precious truths in the book of God, we had need to be well skilled in the defending this of the resurrection of Christ.

I mean not to enter into controversies ; only I shall declare those clear demonstrations, that substantially prove Christ to have risen again ; namely, the several appearances that Christ made to others after his resurrection. 1. He appeared unto Mary Magdalen apart. As a woman was the first instrument of death, so was a woman the first messenger of life. 2. He appeared to all the Maries together, as they returned homewards from the sepulchre. Never any truly sought for Christ, but with these women, they were sure to find Christ. 3. He appeared to Simon Peter alone ; he first went into the sepulchre, and he first saw him that was raised thence.

4. He appeared to the two disciples journeying towards Emmaus; the name of the one was Cleopas; and probable it is the other was Luke, " who out of modesty concealed his own name," saith Theophilact. 5. He appeared unto the ten apostles, when the doors were shut. 6. He appeared to all the disciples, when Thomas was with them; and then shewed them his wounds, to strengthen the weak faith of his wavering servants. 7. He appeared to Peter, and John, and Janies, and Nathanael, and Thomas, and two other disciples, when they were fishing at the sea of Tiberias ; where he proved the verity of his Deity by that miracle of the fishes ; and the verity of his humanity by eating meat with them. 8. He appeared unto more than five hundred brethren at once ; of this we read not in the evangelists, but the apostle Paul records it. 9. He appeared unto James, the brother of the Lord ; *i. e.* the cousin-german of Christ, according to the flesh, called James the Just, in regard of his upright life. 10. He appeared to the eleven disciples, on mount Tabor in Galilee. And this Matthew intimates, when Jesus bade the woman tell his brethren that he was risen, and that they should 'go into Galilee, and there they should see him ; and accordingly in that mountain where Jesus had appointed them, they saw him, and worshipped him. 11. He appeared to all his apostles and disciples upon mount Olivet, by Jerusalem, when in the presence of them all he ascended up into heaven. 12. He appeared unto Paul travelling unto Damascus.

My meaning is not to speak of all these appearances in order, but of the most considerable.

#### SECT. IV. *Of Christ's Appearing to Mary Magdalen.*

On the first day were many appearances : but I shall speak only of one or two, as related by the evangelist John.

1. Christ appeared unto Mary Magdalen apart ; " The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalen, early,

when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre ;" she came whilst it was yet dark ; she departed from home before day, and by that time she came to the sepulchre the sun was about to rise. Being come thither, she finds the stone rolled away, and the body of Jesus gone. Upon this she runs to Peter and John, and tells them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." Then Peter and John ran to see, they looked into the sepulchre, and not finding the body there, they presently returned. By this time Mary Magdalen was come back, and howsoever the disciples would not stay, yet she was resolved to abide by it, and to see the issue.

We find this appearance, for our farther assurance, attended with each needful circumstance : here is the time when, the place where, the persons to whom, the manner how he appeared, together with the consequents after his appearance. 1. For the time when he appeared ; " Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning." It was the first day of the week, the next day to their sabbath ; and it was very early in the morning ; the appearance was early, but Mary's seeking Christ was so early that it was yet dark. She sought him early, whom she loved entirely ; they that will not seek Christ until they have given over seeking other things, may justly fear to miss Christ. 2. For the place where he appeared ; it was in the garden, where Christ was buried. 3. For the person to whom he appeared ; it was Mary Magdalen ; she that sometime lived a sinful life, that was no better than a common curtezan\*, now is first up to seek our Saviour. Let never any despair of mercy. Her



\* There is no proof of this from the Scriptures. They who think thus of her confound her with the sinful woman mentioned Luke vii. 37, &c. But Mary Magdalen, or Mary of Magdala, appears to have been an entirely different person. See Doddridge on Luke viii. 2.

love to Christ appears at this time, "But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." (1.) "Mary stood at the sepulchre;" she stood by the grave of Christ; it signifies her great love. Mary chooseth Christ's tomb for her best home, and his dead corpse for her chief comfort; having lost that light of the Sun of Righteousness, she desired to dwell in darkness, in the shadow of death. (2.) But "Mary stood at the sepulchre weeping." This was love indeed; see how every word is a degree of love. She cannot think of Jesus as lost, but she weeps; she weeps for having lost him whom she loved; at first she mourned for the departure of his soul out of his body, and now she laments the taking his body out of the grave. (3.) "And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." She did so weep that she did seek withal; her weeping hindered not her seeking; she sought, to what purpose? that Christ is not in the tomb her own eyes have seen; the disciples hands have felt; and yet for all this she will be stooping down, and looking in; she would rather condemn her own eyes of error, she would rather suspect all testimonies for untrue, than not to look after him whom she had lost.

For the manner how he appeared; it was first by his angels, and secondly by himself. 1. There was an apparition of angels, "she seeth two angels in white, sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. For this appearance of angels was not only a preparation to Christ's appearance. In this appearance we see further, a question and answer: the angels question Mary, "Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Here was the cause of Mary's tears; she knows not whither to go to find any comfort; her Lord is gone, his life is gone, his soul is gone, his body is gone; yea, gone, and carried she knows not whither.

2. After this Christ appears; but first as unknown, and then as known. First, As unknown, "She turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener," &c. In this apparition of Christ unknown, I shall only take notice of Christ's question, and Mary's inquiry. His question is in these words; "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" (1.) "Why weepest thou?" As if he had said, there is no cause of weeping now, lo, I am risen from the dead, and become the first-born of them that sleep! (2.) "Whom seekest thou?" She seeks Christ, and Christ asks her, whom she seeks. A shower of tears comes betwixt her and him, and she cannot see him, or it may be, "her eyes were holden that she should not know him;" or it may be he appeared in some other shape, such as resembled the gardener, whom she took him for.

For Mary's inquiry, "She supposing him to be the gardener, said, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Her words are not much unlike the answer she gave the angels; only she seems to speak more harshly to Christ than she did to the angels; to them she complains of others; "They have taken away my Lord;" but to Christ she speaks as if she would charge him with the fact. But love, as it fears where it needs not; so it suspects very often where it hath no cause. When love is at a loss, he, or any that comes but in our way, hath done it, hath taken him away. Something she spoke now to Christ, which she had not mentioned to the angels. She said not unto them, "Tell me where he is, and I will take him away?" There is no effort too hard for love; she speaks without fear, she promises without condition, she makes no exception, as if nothing were impossible that love suggested.

Secondly. Christ appears as known; "Jesus saith unto

her, Mary ; she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master." "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." She that hitherto had sought without finding, and wept without comfort, and called without answer; even to her Christ now appears ; and at his appearance this passes betwixt them : first, he speaks unto her, and then she replies unto him. 1. He speaks unto her, "Mary!" It was but a word, but O what life? what spirit? what quickening and reviving was in the word? The voice of Christ is powerful ; "If the Spirit of Christ come along with the word, it will rouse hearts, raise spirits, work wonders." And at this word her tears are dried up, no more tears now, unless they be tears for joy. Observe the way how you may know the voice of Jesus Christ ; if it be effectual, it usually singles a man out ; yea, though it be generally spoken by a minister ; yet the voice of Christ will speak particularly to the very heart of a man, with a marvellous kind of majesty and glory stamped upon it, and shining in it. Take a broken, drooping spirit, he hears the free offer of grace, the precious promises of God in Christ ; but he casts by all promises ; but when the Lord comes in, he speaks particularly to his heart, he meets with all his objections, so that he thinks, "This is the Lord, and this is to me." 2. "She said unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master." As she was ravished with his voice, so impatient of delay, she takes his talk out of his mouth, and to his first and only word she answered but one other, "Rabboni, which is to say, Master." A wonder that in this verse but two words should pass betwixt them two ; but some give this reason, that "a sudden joy rousing all her passions, she could neither proceed in her own, nor give him leave to go forward in his speech."

For the consequents after this appearance, "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father ; but go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father ; and

to my God, and your God." "Touch me not." Mary is not satisfied to see her Lord, nor is she satisfied to hear her Lord, but she must touch him, embrace his feet, but on a sudden he checks her forwardness; as if he had said, O Mary, fix not thy thoughts so much upon my present condition, inasmuch as this is not the highest pitch of my exaltation; I have not as yet attained to that, nor shall I attain to it until I ascend. The degrees of my exaltation are, 1. My resurrection. 2. My ascension. 3. My session at God's right hand; but that is not yet. "But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God;" this was the command of Christ; instead of touching him, she must go with a message to his apostles; and this was more beneficial both to her and them.

But what means he to speak of the ascension, when as yet we are but upon the resurrection? I suppose this was to prevent their mistake, who might have thought if Christ were risen, then they should have his company again as heretofore. No, saith Christ, I am not risen, to make any abode with you; my rising is in reference to my ascending. But whither will he ascend? "To his Father, and our Father; to his God, and our God." O blessed message! This is the voice of a Father to his Son; "All that I have is thine." Now if this Father be also God, and if all that is God's be also ours, what can we desire more? But here is the question, whether his Father and God be also ours? That he is Christ's Father, and Christ is God, is without all question. But that his Father should be our Father; and that his God should be our God; this were gospel indeed. O then what a gospel is this! "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, that our relations and interests are all one; the same Father that is mine is theirs, and the same God that is mine is theirs."

SECT. VI. *Of Christ's Appearance to his ten Disciples.*

On this day some reckon five appearances ; but I shall now only take notice of the last. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week ; when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you ; and when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his feet." In these words we have the appearance of Christ with all its circumstances. As, when he appeared ; where he appeared ; to whom he appeared ; how he appeared. So necessary was it to confirm this point, that not a needful circumstance must be wanting. And first is laid down the time ; "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week." 1. It was the same day, that is, the very day of rising ; the same day that he appeared to Peter, to the two disciples going to Emmaus, to the women coming to the sepulchre, and to Mary Magdalén ; the very same day he appears to the ten. 2. It was the same day at evening. Both at morn, noon, and evening, Christ shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. Early in the morning he appeared to Mary, and presently after to the three Maries, who touched his feet, and worshipped him. About noon he appeared to Simon Peter ; in the afternoon he travelled with two of his disciples almost eight miles, to the castle of Emmaus ; and in the evening of the same day, he returned invisible from Emmaus to Jerusalem. At all times of the day, Christ is prepared, and preparing grace for his people. 3. It was the same day at evening, "being the first of the week." When Joseph shewed himself unto his brethren, he would not do it at first, and yet he dealt very kindly with them ; but Christ's kindness is far above Joseph's ; for on the first day of the week, the very same day that he rose from the dead, he appears unto them.

Secondly. The place is specified in this passage, "where the disciples were assembled," The evangelist

Luke speaks expressly it was in Jerusalem ; but in what house of Jerusalem is unknown ; only some conjecture that it was in the house of some disciple, wherein was an upper room. This upper room, according to the manner of their buildings at that time, was the most large and capacious of any other, and the most retired and free from disturbance. Christ came in when the doors were shut, either causing the doors to give place, the disciples not knowing how ; or else altering the very substance of the doors, that his body might pass through them without destruction. I know not but he that thickens the waters to carry his body, might also attenuate the doors, to make way for his body.

Thirdly. The persons to whom he appeared were his disciples ; they that were shut up, not daring to step out of doors for fear of the Jews. It is Christ's usual course to appear to them who are full of fears and griefs, and most in dangers ; " when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."

Fourthly. For the manner how he appeared. " He stood in the midst: he said, Peace be unto you: he shewed unto them his hands and his side." 1. " He stood in the midst." O what comfort it is here to see Jesus Christ stand in the midst ; now may the disciples behold him as their blessed Peace-maker, their Mediator, as one that hath slain the enmity ; not only that enmity betwixt men and men, Jews and Gentiles ; but also betwixt God and men. This he did by his death, and now he declares it at his resurrection, " having slain the enmity by his cross, he came and preached peace." 2. " He said, Peace be unto you." A seasonable salutation ; for now were the disciples in fear and trouble ; they had no peace with God, or man, or with their own consciences ; and therefore a more welcome news could not have come.

(1.) It speaks their peace with God. Sin was it that brought a difference betwixt God and man. Now this

difference Jesus Christ had taken away by his death, "Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world." This was the great design of Christ's coming, to make peace betwixt God and man; his Father imposed this office upon him, and Jesus Christ undertook it, and discharged it, and he proclaims it, in the first place to his disciples, "Peace be unto you."

(2.) It speaks their peace with man. I know no reason why we should exclude civil peace out of Christ's wish; many a promise and precept we have in the word, scattered here and there, to this purpose, "And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid."—"Follow peace and holiness, without which no man shall see God." *Orbem pacatum* was ever a clause in the prayers of the primitive church, that "the world might be quiet;" I am sure it is Christ's command, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

(3.) It speaks their peace among themselves, peace one with another; such is, or should be, the condition of the church. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity within itself;" the apostle dwells on this unity, "there is one body, and one spirit, and one hope, and one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." The church is a court, whose very pillars are peace. The building of Christianity knows no other material to work upon. If we look upon the church itself, "there is one body;" if upon the very soul of it, "there is one spirit;" if upon the endowment of it, "there is one hope;" if upon the head of it, "there is one Lord;" if upon the life of it, "there is one faith;" if upon the door of it, "there is one baptism;" if upon the father of it, "there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." It was sometimes Christ's command unto his apostles, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with

another." And as a blessed effect of this salutation, (for I look upon them as words full of virtue,) the apostles and churches of Christ kept a most sweet harmony, "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul."

(4.) It speaks peace within, peace of conscience. The apostles had exceedingly fallen from Christ ; one had betrayed him, and another denied him, all left him alone in the midst of his enemies ; and yet to them he speaks, "Peace be unto you." I know not a better ground for comfort of poor humbled sinners than this is ; it may be you have dealt very unkindly with Jesus Christ ; you have forsook him, denied him, forsworn him ; O but consider, all this hindered not Christ's appearing to his apostles ; he comes unexpected, and quiets their spirits : he stays not till they had sued to him for mercy, but of his mere love he stills the waves, and calms their troubled spirits, working in them according to his word, "Peace be unto you."

3. "He shewed unto them his hands and his side." I look upon this as a true and real manifestation of his resurrection. Christ's body yet remaining on earth was not entered into that fulness of glory ; and therefore he might then retain some scars, or blemishes, to manifest the truth of his resurrection unto his disciples. O the wonderful condescensions of Christ ! what helps doth he continually afford to beget in us faith ? If we are ignorant, he instructs us ; if we err, he reduceth us ; if we sin, he corrects us ; if we stand, he holds us up ; if we fall, he lifts us up again ; if we go, he leads us ; if we come to him, he is ready to receive us ; there is not a passage of Christ between him and his, but is an argument of love, and a means either of begetting, or of increasing faith.

## CHAP. II.

*SECT. I. Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Resurrection.*

THAT in all respects we may look on Jesus. 1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of salvation in his resurrection, and during the time of his abode upon the earth after his resurrection. This is worth the knowing ; on it depends our justification, sanctification, salvation ; for “if Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins, and our faith is in vain, and our hope is in vain.” O my soul, study this point ; many take it up in gross, they can run over this article of their creed, “The third day he rose again from the dead ;” but for a particular understanding of it, in respect of the time, or the end, or the manner, or the certainty, how many are to seek ? I shall appeal to thyself, are not many discoveries already made, which before thou never tookest notice of ! and if thou wouldest but study this point, how much more might yet appear, especially to thine own good ? It is not enough to know Christ’s resurrection, unless thou know it for thyself. Be sure thou hast this in mind, “That Christ rose again, but what is that to me ?” Saving knowledge is ever joined with a particular application. If Christ be my head, then he could not rise but I rose with him, and in him ; and thus, O my soul, look on Christ ; and thus search into every particular of Christ’s resurrection. Come, study when he rose ; study the arguments that make out Christ’s resurrection sure and certain ; study all the appearances of Jesus Christ. O ! what delightful studies are these ! Hadst thou been with them to whom Christ appeared, would not thy heart have leaped with joy ? Come, study it closely, for the benefits of these appearances extend to thee. Know this for thyself.

SECT. II. *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation in his resurrection. 1. Consider the time when Christ rose again. As Christ had his three days, and no more, so must thou have the same three days like unto his ; the first day was called the day of preparation ; the second was the sabbath-day ; and the third day was the resurrection day ; so thy first day is a day of preparation, a day of passion, wherein thou must strive against sin and satan, wherein thou must suffer all their darts till thou diest ; and thy second day is a day of rest, wherein thy body must lie in the grave, and thy flesh rest in hope ; wherein thou shalt “enter into peace, and rest in thy bed,” until the trumpet sound, and bid thee, “Arise, and come to judgment ;” and thy third day is a day of resurrection.

2. Consider the reasons why Christ arose ; was it not to confound the Jews ? They could not endure to hear of Christ’s resurrection, and therefore when Peter and the other apostles preached that point, “They were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.” Again, was it not to confirm the faith of Christ’s followers ? Till he was risen, their faith was weak ; but after he had shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs, they could then cry out, “My Lord, and my God.” Again, was it not to evidence, that he had fully satisfied all our debts ? The apostle tells us, that Christ was our surety ; at his death he was arrested, and cast into prison, whence he could not come till all was paid ; and therefore to hear that Christ is risen, is a clear evidence that God is satisfied. Again, was it not to conquer sin, death, and the devil ? Now he took from death his sting, and from hell its standard ; now he seized upon the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to the cross : now he spoiled principalities and powers, and carried away the keys of death and hell ; now he came out of the grave as a mighty conqueror, saying, as Deborah did in her song,

“O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength, thou hast marched valiantly.” Again, was it not to become the first-fruits of them that sleep? Christ was the first that rose again to die no more; and by virtue of his resurrection, (as being the first-fruits,) we must rise again; “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming.” Again, was it not that he might be declared to be the Son of God? Was it not that he might be exalted and glorified? This is the main reason of all; see thou to this! O give him the glory of his resurrection; so meditate on and consider this transaction, as to ascribe to his name all honour and glory. What, is he risen from the dead? Hath God “highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name?” O then “let every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

3. Consider the manner of Christ’s resurrection. (1.) He rose as a common person; in which respect his resurrection concerns us no less than himself. We must not think that when Christ was raised, it was no more than when Lazarus was raised; his resurrection was the resurrection of us all; it was in the name of us all, and had in it a seed-like virtue, to work the resurrection of us all. (2.) He rose by his own power; and so did none but Jesus Christ from the beginning of the world. O my soul, he was able to raise himself, much more is he able to raise thee up. (3.) He rose with an earthquake. O the power of Christ! What ailed thee, O earth, to skip like a ram? “The Lord reigneth, and therefore the earth is moved.” O what a rocky heart is mine? How much harder than that rock, that moves not, melts not at the presence of God, the presence of the God of Jacob?

4. An angel ministered to him at his resurrection; “An angel came, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.” Angels were the first ministers of the gospel, the first preachers of Christ’s resurrec-

tion ; they preached more of Christ than all the prophets did ; they first told the women, that Christ was risen ; and they did the first service to Christ at his resurrection, “in rolling the stone from the tomb’s mouth.” O my soul, that thou wert but like these blessed angels ! How is it that they are so forward in God’s service, and thou art so backward ? One day thou expectest to be equal with the angels, and art thou now so far behind them ? Many of the bodies of the saints arose out of their graves at his resurrection ; as the angels ministered to him, so the saints waited on him ; look upon them as the fruit of Christ’s resurrection, and as an earnest of thy own. Christ rose again with a true and perfect body, with an incorruptible and powerful body, with a spiritual and agile body, with a glorious body, brighter than the sun in his utmost glory ; “and he shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” O consider it, till thou feelest the influence, and comest to the assurance of this blessed change.

5. Consider the several appearances of Jesus Christ. (1.) Muse on his appearance to Mary Magdalen. Oh the grief before he appeared ! And, oh the joy when he appeared ! 1. Before she apprehended nothing but that some or other had taken away her Lord. These were all the words she uttered ; “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.” 2. After he appeared she was filled with joy : when nothing else would satisfy, Jesus himself appears. At first he is unknown, she takes him for the gardener ; but within awhile he utters a voice that opens both her ears and eyes. “Jesus saith unto her, Mary.” It was the sweetest sound that ever she heard ; hereby the cloud is scattered, and the Sun of Righteousness appears ; this one word lightens her eyes, and cheers her heart. I know not in all the book of God a soul more depressed with sorrow, and lifted up with joy. O meditate on this ! If Christ be absent, all is night ; but if Christ appear, he turns all again into lightsome day. (2.) Muse on his appearance

to the ten disciples. "When the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, then came Jesus, and stood in the midst, saying to them, Peace be unto you." Before his appearing, sorrow and fear possessed their spirits ; sometimes they walked abroad, and were sad ; and sometimes they kept within, and shut the doors upon themselves, as being exceedingly afraid. In this condition Jesus Christ (that knows best the times and seasons of grace and comfort,) comes and stands in the midst of their assembly ; he comes in, they know not how ; and no sooner he is in, but he salutes them, " Peace be unto you."

This was the prime of all his wishes ; no sooner is he risen, but wisheth peace to all his apostles ; no sooner meets he with them, but the very opening of his lips was with these words. They are the first words, at the first meeting, on the very first day. A sure sign that peace was in the heart of Jesus Christ ; howsoever it is with us, peace, or war, there is the commonweal where Christ is king ; and there is nothing but peace. Come, examine. Art thou, O my soul, a member of this body ? a subject of this commonweal ? Hath the influence of Christ's peace (wrought and declared at his resurrection) any force on thee ? Hast thou peace with God ? and peace within ? and peace without ? Dost thou feel that ointment poured upon Aaron's head, and running down the skirts of his garments ? Doth the Spirit assure thee, that Christ, the Prince of Peace, hath made peace and reconciliation betwixt God and thee. " O how beautiful upon the mountains would the feet of him be, that should publish peace, that should bring these good tidings, that thou art a citizen of that Jerusalem where God is King, and Christ the Prince of Peace ? Where all the buildings are compact together, as a city that is at unity within itself ! "

### *Sect. III. Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. But what is there in Christ's

resurrection, that should move our souls to desire it? I answer, 1. Something in itself. 2. Something in reference to us.

1. There is something in itself. Had we but a view of the glory, dignity, and excellency of Christ, as raised from the dead, it would put us on this heavenly motion; we should "fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat." The more excellent and glorious any good is, the more eager should our desires be. Now Christ raised from the dead, is an excellent object; the resurrection is the glorifying of Christ; yea, his glorifying took its beginning at his blessed resurrection; now it was that "God highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name."

2. There is something in reference unto us; as, (1.) "He rose again for our justification." I must needs grant, that Christ's death, and not his resurrection, is the meritorious cause of our justification; but on the other side, Christ's resurrection, and not his death, is for the applying of our justification. As the stamp adds no virtue, nor matter of real value to a piece of gold, but only it makes that value which before it had, actually applicable and current unto us; so the resurrection of Christ was no part of the price or satisfaction which Christ made to God, yet it is that which applies all his merits, and makes them of force unto his members. "If Christ be not risen again, ye are yet in your sins, and your faith is in vain." Remission of sin, (which is a part of our justification,) though purchased by Christ's death, yet could not be applied to us, or be made ours without Christ's resurrection; and in this respect, oh how desirable it is! (2.) He rose again for our sanctification. So the apostle, "He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with Christ." If you would know how you that were blind in heart, uncircumcised in spirit, utterly unacquainted with the life of God, are now light in the Lord, affecting heavenly things, walking in righteousness; it comes from this blessed resurrection of Jesus Christ; we are quickened

with Christ; it is Christ's resurrection that raised ~~our~~ souls. Whence, " Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is the end of Christ's resurrection, that we should be new creatures, of new lives, new principles, new conversations: he rose again for our sanctification. (3.) He rose again for our resurrection to eternal life: Christ is the pattern, and pledge, and cause of the resurrection of our bodies; " For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." There is a virtue flowing from Christ to his saints, by which they shall be raised up at the latter day: not but that all the wicked shall be raised again by the power of Christ, as he is a judge; for " all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth;" yet with this difference, " they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (4.) He rose again for our assurance of our justification, sanctification, and salvation. This is the reason why the apostle useth these words to prove the resurrection of Christ, " I will give you the sure mercies of David :" none of God's mercies had been sure to us if Christ had not risen again from the dead. But now all is made sure; his work of redemption being fully finished, the mercy which thereupon depended was now made certain, (and as the apostle speaks) " sure unto all the seed."

Methinks a thought of this object, in respect of itself, and in respect of us, should put our souls into a longing frame. Is it not a desirable thing to see the king in his beauty? If Christ incarnate was the " desire of nations," how much more is Christ in his glory? If it was Augustin's great wish to have seen Christ in the flesh, how should we wish to see Christ risen from the dead? In this consideration we cannot fathom the thousand, thousand part of the worth and excellency of Jesus Christ. Or if Christ's resurrection in itself will not stir up our desires, is it not desirable in reference unto us? What,

that he should rise again for our justification ? That by virtue of his resurrection, our souls should appear righteous before the judgment-seat of God ! O, my soul, that thy portion may be with theirs who have right and title to this blessed resurrection of Jesus Christ ! O that thou wert on the wing in thy desires after Christ ! O that feelingly thou knewest him, and the power of his resurrection ! that thou wert resolved to give no sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids, until thou couldst say, “ Christ’s resurrection is mine !”

SECT. IV. *Of hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. We may examine the firmness of our hope in Christ’s resurrection by these signs : 1. If Christ’s resurrection be mine, then is Christ’s death mine ; the fruits or effects of Christ’s death and resurrection cannot be severed : “ If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection.” 2. If Christ’s resurrection be mine, then is Christ’s Spirit mine, yea, then I am quickened by the Spirit of Christ. “ If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his :—But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, then he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies,” (and I may add your immortal souls,) “ by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Christ’s Spirit (if Christ’s resurrection be ours) will have the same effect in our souls, that it had in his body ; as it raised up the one, so it will raise up the other ; as it quickened the one, so it will quicken the other. But how shall we know whether we have received this quickening Spirit ? Many pretend to the Spirit, but how may we be assured that the Spirit is ours ? I answer,

(1.) The Spirit is a Spirit of illumination ; here is the beginning of his work, he begins in light ; as in the first creation, the first born of God’s works was light. “ God

said, let there be light, and there was light ;" so in this new creation, the first work is light ; God, " who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts ; to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." There is a light in the mind, and a light in the heart, of those who have the Spirit of Christ ; not only to know the truth, but to love it, believe it, embrace it. Consider whether any of this new light of Jesus Christ hath shined into thy heart ; take heed, deceive not thyself, thou mayest have a great deal of wit and knowledge, and yet go to hell ; this light is a light shining into thy heart ; this light is a Christ-discovering light ; this light is a sin-discovering light ; this light will cause thee to find out thy hypocrisy, deadness, dulness in spiritual duties ; if thou hast not this light, thou art near to eternal burnings ; darkness is one of the properties of hell, and without this light, inward darkness will lead to utter darkness, where is " weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." (2.) The Spirit is a quickening Spirit, a Spirit of sanctification ; such was the Spirit whereby Christ was raised. " He was declared mightily to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of sanctification by the resurrection from the dead." That Spirit which raised up Jesus Christ, was the same Spirit which sanctified his human nature ; and such is that quickening Spirit to all in whom it dwelleth ; it is a Spirit of holiness, and it works holiness, changing the heart, and turning the bent of it from sin to holiness. " If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." O, my soul, try thyself by this sign, dost thou find such an inward change wrought in the soul ? Dost thou find the law of God, a law of holiness written on thy heart ? Dost thou find a law within thee contrary to the law of sin, commanding with authority that which is holy and good ? If so, surely this is no other " but the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ ;" or the law of this quickening Spirit, communicated from Christ unto the soul.

3. If Christ's resurrection be mine, then am I "planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection;" then I am made conformable to Christ in his resurrection; now if we would know wherein that resemblance is, the apostle tells us, "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Our mortification is a resemblance of Christ's death, and our vivification is a resemblance of Christ's resurrection. In this ground of our hope concerning our interest in the resurrection of Christ, I shall propound these questions: 1. Whether our souls are vivified? 2. Whether we grow in our vivification?

For the first, the truth of our vivification will appear by these rules: 1. True vivification is general, both in respect of us, and in respect of grace. In respect of us, it is diffused throughout the whole man; "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly," (saith the apostle.) And, in respect of grace, it is in every grace. Indeed, some Christians are eminent in some graces; and some in others; some have more love, and some more knowledge, and some more patience, and some more self-denial; but all that are true Christians have each of these graces in some measure; if vivification be true, there is a whole work in the heart and life; as the light in the air runs through the whole hemisphere, so grace runs through the whole man.

2. True vivification is a new life acting upon a new principle of faith. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Paul's life is a spiritual life, and the spring of his life is the Son of God. Jesus Christ is essentially, fundamentally life itself; and by his incarnation, passion, resurrection, he is life for his saints; they live in him, and by him, and for him, and through him; he is the heart of their spiritual life. O, my soul, dost thou live this life of faith on the Son of God? Canst thou make use of Christ in every condition? Dost thou look up to Jesus, and desirest no more good name, repute, or honour than Christ will afford thee?

Or, in case of death, dost thou, like Stephen, resign thy soul to Christ ? Dost thou see death conquered in the resurrection of Christ ? Dost thou look beyond death ? Dost thou over-eye all things betwixt thee and glory ? O the sweet of this “ life of faith on the Son of God ! ” If thou knowest what this means, then mayest thou assure thyself of thy vivification.

3. True vivification is a new life acting upon a new principle of hope of glory. “ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.” By Christ’s resurrection we have a lively hope of our resurrection unto glory. Is not Christ our head ? and if he be risen to glory, shall not his members follow after him ? Certainly there is but one life, one Spirit, one glory of Christ and his members ; “ The glory which thou gavest me, I have given unto them,” said Christ. The soul that is vivified, hath a lively hope of glory on several grounds. As, (1.) Because of the promises of glory set down in the word : now on these promises hope fastens her anchor ; if Christ hath promised, how should I but maintain a lively hope ? (2.) Because of the first-fruits of the Spirit ; there are sometimes foretastes of the glory, drops of heaven poured into a soul ; whence it comfortably concludes, If I have the earnest and first-fruits, surely in his time Jesus Christ will give the harvest. (3.) Because of Christ’s resurrection unto glory : now he arose as a common person, and he went up into heaven as a common person ; whence hope is lively, saying, Why should I doubt, seeing I am “ quickened together with Christ, and raised up together with Christ, and am made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places ? ” Try, O my soul, by this sign : art thou lively in the hope of glory ? Doth thy heart leap within at that thought of thy inheritance in heaven ? In a lively fountain the waters will leap and sparkle ; so if thy hope

be lively, thou wilt have living joys, living speeches, living delights ; amidst all thy afflictions, thou thou wilt say, These will not endure for ever ; I myself shall away ere long, glory will come at last. O the sweet of this life of hope ? If thou feelest these stirrings, it is an argument of thy vivification.

4. True vivification acts all its duties upon a new principle of love to Christ ; men not enlivened by Jesus Christ may do much, and go far in outward service ; yea, they may come to suffering, and yet without love to Christ, all is lost, all comes to nothing. “ Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels,—though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and knowledge,—though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor ; and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.”

But how may we know that all our actings are out of love to Jesus Christ ? I answer, 1. If we act by the rule of Christ. “ If ye love me, keep my commandments.—He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.—If any man love me, he will keep my commandments.” He that loves Christ, will look upon every act, every service, every performance, whether it be according to the rule of Christ, and then on he goes with it. 2. If we act to the honour of Christ. We may pray, and hear, and preach, and act ourselves more than for the honour of Jesus Christ ; while Christ shewed miracles, and fed his followers to the full, they cried up Jesus, and none like Jesus ; but when he pressed sincerity upon them, and preparation for sufferings, “ from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.” It is no news for men to fall off when their ends fail ; only they that love Christ, look not at these outward things : and hence it is, that in all their actings, they will carry on the design of the Father, in advancing the honour of the Son, whatever it cost them. O my soul, apply this to thyself ; if thou livest the life of

love, if in all thy actings, duties, services, thou art carried on with a principle of love to Jesus Christ, it is a sure sign of thy vivification.

For the second question, whether we grow in our vivification? We may discover it thus: 1. We grow, when we are led on to the exercise of new graces; this the apostle calls adding one grace unto another: "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." At first a Christian doth not exercise all graces; though all graces be planted in him, yet the exercise of them all is not at once; but, as wicked men are led on from one sin unto another, and so grow worse and worse; so good men are led from one grace to another; and so increase, "Tribulation working patience, and patience experience; and experience hope.

2. We grow, when we find new degrees of the same grace; as when love grows more fervent, when knowledge abounds, and hath a larger apprehension of spiritual things; when faith goes on to plerophory, or full assurance of faith. When godly sorrow proceeds from mourning for sin, as contrary to God's holiness; to mourn for it, as contrary to him who loves us; when obedience enlargeth its bounds, and we abound more and more in the work of the Lord. "I know thy works," (said Christ to the church of Thyatira,) "I know thy works, and the last to be more than the first."

3. We grow, when the fruits and duties we perform grow more ripe, more spiritual, and more to the honour of Christ; it may be we pray not more, nor longer than sometimes we used; it may be our prayers have not more wit, or memory, are not more spiritual, and more to Christ's honour, than sometimes they were. Now we must know, that one short prayer, put up in faith, with a broken heart, and aiming at the honour of Christ, argues more growth in grace, than prayers of a day long, and

never so eloquent, without the like qualifications. In every duty we should look at their ends and aims, for if we debase ourselves, in the sense of our own vileness, and emptiness, and inability ; and if we aim at God's honour, and praise, and glory, it is a good sign of growth ; we call this the spiritual part of duty, when it is from God, and through God, and to God.

4. We grow, when we are more rooted in Christ ; so the apostle describes it, " a growing up unto him in all things." Growth of grace is usually expressed by the growing into Christ ; " Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Jesus Christ." As if to grow in grace without him, were nothing, as indeed it is. Philosophers, moral men, and others, may grow in virtues, but not in Christ. Come, then, search and try, whether we are more rooted in Christ : when a young plant is new set, the roots are a small depth in the earth, one may pull them up with his hands ; but as the tree shooteth up in height, so it strikes the root deeper and deeper : so it is with us ; we have not so firm and near a conjunction with Christ at our first union ; but the more we live with him, like good trees, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, the more we strike our root downwards.

O my soul, try the growth of vivification by these few signs ; art thou led on to the exercise of new graces, adding grace to grace ? Dost thou find new degrees of the same grace ? Is thy love more hot, thy faith more firm ? All thy boughs more laden and filled with the fruits of righteousness ? Are all thy duties more spiritual ? Are thy ends more raised to aim at God, to sanctify him, and to debase thyself ? Art thou more rooted in Christ ? In all thy duties, graces, and gracious actings, hast thou learned habitually to say, " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ?" Dost thou interest Christ more and more in all thou dost ? Dost thou know and affect Christ more and more ? Come, search, try ; it may be little wind, have formerly shaken thee ; but thy root is struck lower

into Christ ; and now thou art not so soon shaken with every wind ; surely thy hope is well-grounded ; thou hast a part in Christ's resurrection.

**Sect. V. *Of believing in Jesus in that Respect.***

Let us believe in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. Scrupulous souls ! throw not away your confidence ; " ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?" Was not satisfaction and justification, payment of debt, and discharge of bonds required of him, and of necessity for us ? O believe, and that I may persuade to purpose, I shall lay down, as before, 1. Some directions ; and, 2. Some encouragements of faith.

1. For directions of faith, in reference to Christ's resurrection, remember, (1.) Faith must directly go to Christ. (2.) It must go to Christ, as God in the flesh. (3.) It must go to Christ, as God in the flesh made under the law. (4.) It must go to Christ, not only as made under the directive part of the law by his life, but under the penal part by his death. (5.) It must go to Christ as God in the flesh, made under the directive and penal part of the law, and as quickened by the Spirit. " He was put to death in the flesh," (saith Peter,) " and quickened by the Spirit." And accordingly must be the method and order of our faith. After we have looked on Christ as dead in the flesh, we must go on to see him as quickened by the Spirit ; " If Christ was not raised, or quickened, (saith the apostle) your faith is in vain ;" as if he had said, To believe in Christ as only in respect of his birth, life, death, and to go no farther, would be but a vain faith ; therefore all the sermons of the apostles represented Christ, not only as crucified, but as raised. This was the way of the apostles' preaching ; they related an history (I speak it with reverence) of one Jesus Christ, that was the Word of God, and that was become man, and how he was crucified at Jerusalem, and how he was

raised from the dead ; and all this in a plain, simple, spiritual manner ; and while they were telling those blessed truths, the Spirit fell upon the people, and they had faith wrought in them. Faith is not wrought so much in the way of ratiocination, as by the Spirit of God coming upon the souls of people, by the relation or representation of Jesus Christ to the soul. And this our Lord himself hints, " As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Come, then, set we before us Christ raised ; and in that respect, we must look up to Jesus.

(6.) Faith in going to Christ, as raised from the dead, is principally and mainly to look to the end of Christ in his resurrection. The very devils may believe the history of Christ's resurrection, " they believe and tremble ;" but the people of God are to look at the meaning of Christ, why he rose from the dead. The supreme end was God's glory, and that was the meaning of Christ's prayer, " Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee ;" with which agrees the apostle, " He rose again from the dead, to the glory of the Father." The subordinate ends were many : as, 1. That he might tread on the serpent's head. 2. That he might destroy the works of the devil. 3. That he might be the first-fruits of them that sleep. 4. That he might assure our faith, that he is able to keep that which we have committed to him against that day. 5. That he might be justified in the Spirit ; as he was begotten in the womb by the Spirit, led up and down in the Spirit, offered up by the eternal Spirit, so he was raised from the dead by the Spirit, and justified in his Spirit at his resurrection. Christ was under the greatest attainder that ever man was ; he stood publickly charged with the guilt of a world of sins ; and therefore he was raised up from the power of death, that he might be declared a righteous person. 6. That he might justify us, " As by

the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came on all men unto justification."

(7.) That he might beget us anew, by his resurrection ; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And this he doth two ways. 1. As our pattern ; "Like as Christ was raised from the dead,—even so we also should walk in newness of life : and likewise reckon ye yourselves to be alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." 2. As the efficient cause thereof, "for when we were dead in sin, he hath quickened us together with Christ ; and ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." O the power of Christ's resurrection ! If we saw a man raised from the dead, how should we admire such a wonderous power ; but the raising of one dead soul, is a greater work than to raise a church-yard of dead bodies.

(8.) That he might sanctify us, which immediately follows the other, "But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." In our regeneration we are risen with Christ, it is the apostle's argument, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,—Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth." As the death of Christ hath the special influence upon our mortification, so the resurrection of Christ hath the special influence on our vivification, "He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with Christ."

But how should I manage my faith, to draw down the virtue of Christ's resurrection for my vivification ? I answer :—Go to the well-head ; look into the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This one act contains in it these particulars ; as, 1, That I must go out of myself, to something else ; this is that check that lies upon that work of grace,

to keep out pride, that faith sees the whole good of the soul in a principle extraneous, even the springs of Jesus. 2. That I must attribute wholly, freely, joyfully, all that I am, to Jesus Christ, and to the effectual working of his grace. "By the grace of God I am what I am; and I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." The life of grace springs only from the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and therefore as I must deny myself, so I must attribute all to him from whom it comes. 3. I must lie at his feet with an humble dependence upon him, and him alone for the supplies of grace; this was the apostle's practice: "That I may be found in him,—That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection,—That by any means, I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!" Christ is the fountain of life, faith is the means of life; the power and original of life is entirely reserved to Jesus Christ; but faith is the band on our part, whereby we are tied unto Christ, and live in Christ; and thus saith Christ himself, "I am the resurrection and the life." Is that all? No, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And, "I am the bread of life." Is that all? No, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." Therefore pray for an increase of faith; complain to Christ, tell him thou canst not believe as thou wouldest, thou canst not get in so much of Christ into thy soul as thou desirest. And act thy faith vigorously on Christ's resurrection, for a farther degree of quickening. Christ is an ever-flowing fountain, and he would have believers to partake abundantly of what is in him; he cannot abide that any should content themselves with a present stock of grace. Christ is not as a stream that fails, or as a channel that runs dry. No, Christ is the Fountain of life. He is the chief ordinance of life that ever God set up. I know there are other means of Christ's appointment, but if thou wilt live at the spring,

drink there, yea, drink abundantly, according to the overflowing of this fountain.

Thus for directions. Now for the encouragement of our faith, to believe in Christ's resurrection. 1. Consider the virtue and influence of this object, into all that golden chain of privileges ; " If Christ be not raised, you are yet in your sins ; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." From the resurrection of Christ flow all those privileges, even from justification to salvation. The first is clear, and therefore all the rest. 2. Consider that Christ's resurrection and the effects of it are nothing unto us, if we do not believe. It is faith that brings down the particular sweetness and comforts of Christ's resurrection unto our souls. It is faith that puts us in the actual possession of Christ's resurrection ; whatsoever Christ is to us before faith, yet really we have no benefit by it until we believe it. It is faith that takes hold on all that Christ has done for us ; and gives us the actual enjoyment of it. O let not the work stick in us ! What, is Christ risen from the dead ? And shall we not eye Christ, and take him home to ourselves by faith ? The apostle tells us, that " he that believeth not, hath made God a liar, because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son." Unbelief belies God in all that he hath done for us. O take heed of this ; without faith, what are we better for Christ's resurrection. 3. Or if we are dazzled, hear his voice, " Fear not, I am the First and the Last, I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen." As if he had said, Come, cast your souls on me ; it is I that have conquered sin, death, and hell, for you. It is I that have broke the serpent's head, that have taken away the sting of death, that have cancelled the bond of the handwriting against you, that have in my hands a general acquittance of your sins. Come, take it, take me, and take all with me ; only believe in him who is risen again for your justification.

SECT. VI. *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation.

1. In his appearance to Mary, Jesus saith unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" Were not these kind words from Jesus Christ? How often hath thy heart sighed out complaints, "O where is he whom my soul loveth? I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love?" And then, was not Christ seen in the mount? Was not thy extremity his opportunity? Did not he bespeak thy comforts with these words, "Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? What wouldst thou have that I can give thee? And what dost thou want that I can give thee? If any thing in heaven or earth can make thee happy, it is all thy own. Wouldst thou have pardon? Thou shalt have it; I freely forgive thee all the debt. Wouldst thou have myself? Behold I am thine, thy Friend, thy Lord, thy Husband, thy Head, thy God." Were not these thy Lord's reviving words? Were not these healing, quickening passages of Christ's love? 2. In his appearance to the ten. "Jesus stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Lo, here more words of love; in the midst of their trouble Christ stands in the midst, speaking peace to their souls; and hath not Christ done the like to thee? Hast thou not many and many a time been in troubles, so that thou knewest not which way to turn thee? And even then, hath not Christ come to thy spirit with an olive-branch of peace? Hath he not wrought wonders in the sea of thy restless thoughts? Hath he not made a calm? And more than so, hath he not filled thee with joy and peace in believing? Hath he not sent thee away from thy prayers and complaints, with a part of heaven in thy soul?

I might thus go on to consider other passages in his other appearances; but are not these enough to draw thy

love? O what love was this! O what humility was this! That Christ, after his resurrection, should converse with men forty days; worthy he was, after so many sorrows, sufferings, reproaches; after so cruel, ignominious, and bitter a death, immediately to have gone to glory. And for the confirmation of his disciples' faith, he might have commanded the angels to have preached his resurrection. No, he himself would stay in person, he himself would make it out by many infallible proofs, he himself would by his own example teach us a lesson of love, of meekness and patience, in waiting after suffering for the reward. Methinks a few of these passages should set all our hearts on a flame of love; "if Christ be risen, set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth." O if the love of Christ were in us, it would make us wholly despise this world; it would make us to forget it, as worldly love makes a man forget God. Nay, it would be so strong and ardent, that we should not be able freely to think on any thing else but Jesus Christ: we should not then fear contempt, or care for disgrace, we should not fear death, or the grave, or hell, or devils, but we should sing in triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

#### SECT. VII. *Of joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. This is the great gospel duty, we should "rejoice in the Lord;" yea, "rejoice evermore." A Christian estate should be a joyful and comfortable estate, and have such joy as the children of Zion, "Sing, O daughter of Zion, shout, O Jerusalem, be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." A thousand reasons might be rendered; but here is one, "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep." A commemoration of

Christ's resurrection hath ever been a means of rejoicing in God.

What can be the condition of thy soul, wherein thou mayest not draw comfort from Christ's resurrection ? 1. Is thy conscience in trouble for sin ? The apostle tells thee, "the answer of a good conscience towards God, is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 2. Art thou afraid of condemnation ? The apostle tells thee, "He was delivered for our offences, and he was raised again for our justification." 3. Dost thou question thy regeneration ? The apostle says, "He hath begotten us again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 4. Art thou distressed, persecuted, troubled on every side ? The apostle tells thee wherein now consists thy confidence, comfort, courage ; to wit, in the life of Christ, in the resurrection of Christ. "We always bear about in our body the dying Jesus, that the life of Jesus might also be made manifest in our body ; for we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." 5. Art thou afraid of death, hell, and the power of the grave ? Why, now, remember that Christ is risen from the dead, and by his glorious resurrection death is swallowed up in victory. Job was so transported with this, that he eminently breaks out, "O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book ! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever ! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God ; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." No man ever since Christ did speak more clearly of Christ's resurrection and his own, than Job did here. Observe in it, O my soul, Job's wish, and the matter wished ; his wish was, that certain words which had been cordial to him, might remain to memory. 1. That they might be

written. 2. That they might be registered in a book ; enrolled upon records, as publick instruments. 3. That they might be engraven in stone, and in the hardest stone, the rock. Records might last long, yet time might injure them, and these words he would have last for ever. Moses and Job are said to have lived at one time ; now Moses wrote the law in stone, and considering that these words were gospel, there was no reason that the law should be in tables of stone, and the gospel in sheets of paper ; no, it were fit that this should be as firm and durable as that ; “ O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book !”

The matter, or words he would have written are these, “ I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall live again.” Here is, first, his Redeemer rising. 2. His own rising and his seeing God. This was the matter of his joy, his Redeemer must rise again ; and he must rise too, and see his Redeemer. As Christ said of Abraham, “ Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.” So it appears of his servant Job, he saw Christ’s day ; both his first day, and his latter day, and he rejoiced and was glad. Away, all doubtful thoughts ; consider what joys were of old, at the foresight of Christ’s resurrection ; but especially what joy was all the world over when he rose again from the dead ; then came the angels from heaven, and appeared in white. “ The disciples were exceeding glad when they saw the Lord ;” all the primitive saints rejoiced at this news ; and because of it, loved the very day on which Christ arose. Certainly the Lord’s-day was in high esteem with the ancient church, and the principal motive was, because of Christ’s resurrection from the dead. O that on these days we could rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice ! O spend more of this day in spiritual rejoicing, especially in commemoration of Christ’s resurrection, (yea, and of the whole work of redemption,) or else you will not answer the institution of our Lord.

SECT. VIII. *Of calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

1. Let us pray that Christ's resurrection may be ours, and that we may be more and more assured of it. Let us say with the apostle, "O that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." O that the Spirit of Holiness, which quickened Christ from the dead, would, by the same glorious power, beget holiness, and faith, and love, and all other graces in my poor soul! O that Christ would, by his resurrection, apply his active and passive obedience to me; O that he would be to me the Lord of the living, and the Prince of life; that he would overcome in me the death of sin, and that he would regenerate, quicken, renew, and fashion me, by the power of godliness, to become like himself.

2. Let us praise God for Christ's resurrection, and for all the privileges flowing from it into our souls. Christ is risen, by his resurrection he hath justified, sanctified, quickened, saved our souls; and therefore, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" surely God requires a thousand hallelujahs, and that we should bless him upon a thousand-stringed instrument. Here is fuel enough, the Lord kindle a great fire in every one of our hearts, to burn out all our lusts, and to inflame all our hearts with a love to Jesus Christ. Can we ever too much praise him for all his actings in our behalf? Are not God's creatures called upon to rejoice with us, and to bless God for his redeeming of us? "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it, shout ye lower parts of the earth, break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." This is the duty we shall do in heaven, and I believe we are never more in heaven, (whilst on earth,) than when we are in this exercise of praising God, and blessing God for Jesus Christ.

SECT. IX. *Of conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

In this particular I shall examine, 1. Wherein we must conform. 2. How this conformity is wrought. 3. What are the means of this conformity.

For the first, wherein we must conform. I answer, in a word, in *vivification*. Christ's resurrection was to newness of life; it was a new life, a life different from that which he lived before, and so is our vivification a new life; it is a life from a new principle; of a new income, and of a new kind.

1. It is a life from a new principle: before vivification, our principle was the flesh; but now we have a new principle, the Spirit of God; even as the soul dwells in the body, so doth the Holy Ghost dwell in the soul of a regenerate person, animating, and actuating, and enlivening it.

2. It is a life of a new income; I mean of grace, power, and light. Before vivification, there was no such income. A man before his conversion may hear, pray, and do all duties; but alas! he feels no power, no communication with Christ. • But after this, thou wilt, in the use of ordinances, frequently feel the saving incomes of God. In prayer thou wilt feel the Spirit carrying thy soul above itself; in hearing the word, thou wilt see the windows of heaven set open, and all manner of spiritual comforts showered down upon thee. In meditation on the promises, or on Divine love, thou wilt find quickenings, encouragings, filling thy heart with gladness, and thy mouth with praises and songs of rejoicing. O what fountains of life are the promises to a living man! What food? what strength? what life is a thought of Christ, of heaven, and of God's love? Whereas all these glorious things of the gospel are to the natural man but as a withered flower, a sealed book, a dry and empty cistern; he hath no use of them.

3. It is a life of another kind. Before vivification, we were dead in sin whilst alive: but after vivification we

live a spiritual life, an heavenly life, an immortal life. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness;" the body indeed is subject to corporal death through the remainders of sin, but the spirit is life here, and shall be life hereafter, even for ever.

That union which thereby comes to be enjoyed with Christ, is such an union as is fruitful in begetting a quickening power in the heart. Justification and sanctification are twins of a birth; and hence it is that vivification (which is one part of sanctification,) is wrought in the soul after the self-same manner. 1. The understanding is enlightened. 2. The will is changed. 3. All the affections are renewed. 4. The internals being quickened, there ensueth the renewing of the outward actions, life, and conversation. And immediately upon this, joy is made in heaven by the angels, God himself applaudeth it, "For this my son was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found."

For the third question; what are the means of this conformity, or vivification on our parts?

1. Wait upon God in the ministry of the word. This is a means whereby Christ ordinarily effecteth this vivification: and by this means it is that dead souls are quickened. The ministry of the word is the trumpet of Jesus Christ; when that sounds, who knows but he may quicken the dead? Hearken therefore to this word of God.

2. Exercise faith upon the Lord Jesus as to justification. As is the clearness of our souls in bottoming ourselves on Christ for righteousness, so will be our quickness and successful progress in the work of holiness.

3. Trace every ordinance and every duty for the appearances of the Son of God. Be much in prayer, hearing, reading, fellowship with saints, the sacraments. Be much in secret conversings with God, in meditation, inquiries, searchings; and (which is a precious work,) be much in diligent watching of, and hearkening to, the movings, workings, intimations of the Spirit of God; be much in observing the methods and interpreting the meanings and

language of God in all his secret dispensations with the soul. Certainly there will be abundance of the life of God conveyed to him that walks in these paths. O for a spirit of prayer and meditation! O for a spirit swallowed up in communion with God! "Thou meetest him that worketh righteousness, and those that remember thee in thy ways."

4. Look much at Christ raised, Christ glorified. Christ's resurrection was the beginning of his glory; and therein is comprehended both the glory that draws desires towards Christ, and the grace and power that establisheth faith in its dependence. Could we keep our hearts in a more constant view, and believing meditation of the glory of Christ, our faces would certainly bring some beams of divinity with them from the mount; the very beholding of Christ hath a mighty virtue to leave the impressions of glory upon our spirits.

5. See our own personal vivification grounded upon the resurrection of Christ; when we can by faith get a sight of this, it is not to speak how courageously and successfully the soul will grapple in the controversies of the Lord against the devil, and our own deceitful hearts: O that I could act my faith more frequently on Christ's resurrection; so that at last I could see it by the light of God, to be a principle of my vivification in particular! What a blessed means would this be?

6. Walk as we have Christ Jesus for an example. This example of Christ yields much to our vivification; who can deny, but that acting with the pattern ever in one's eye, is very advantageous? Come, then, and if we would live the life of God, let us live as Christ lived after his resurrection.

END OF VOL. VIII.

